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THE SCHWEICH LECTURES ON
BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, 1945

IDEAS OF DIVINE RULE
IN THE
ANCIENT EAST

IDEAS OF DIVINE RULE IN THE ANCIENT EAST

BY
C. J. GADD, F.B.A.

THE SCHWEICH LECTURES
OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY
1945

*Regum tinendorum in proprios greges
Reges in ipsos imperium est Iovis.*

LONDON
PUBLISHED FOR THE BRITISH ACADEMY
BY GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4
1948

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THE title chosen for these Lectures is not altogether happy but was the best I could devise to embrace their rather discursive matter. That it should be understood with the limitation 'some ideas' is so self-evident that the lengthening seemed unnecessary. Despite much variety of the topics discussed it is hoped that the object has been kept in view, to observe in what different forms and institutions the universally assumed divine governance was conceived to be exercised over them by the various peoples of the ancient world down to about the time of the Persian dominance. Although attention is given chiefly to the populations of western Asia, the general community of ideas which is shared by these will be seen to extend in several manifestations to Egypt, though with equally remarkable differences. In this respect the drift of these Lectures may be said to emphasize what now hardly needs emphasis, that enough is already known of the ancient civilizations to necessitate their being studied in future as a unity, which began to be marked by contacts earlier than the appearance of written history and was already strong in the spiritual and mental equipment of men's nature before it was alternately consolidated and attacked by the transient influences of political relations.

As usual in this Series the Lectures have been somewhat expanded from the form in which they were delivered and some notes added, both with strict regard to brevity. The abbreviations are those commonly employed in these studies, listed in periodicals, and familiar to all who are likely to look at this book—it was thought needless to reiterate them.

Since the delivery I have had the benefit of criticism from several friends and colleagues, which I have tried to acknowledge in all cases where the point is sufficiently clear; and I gladly take this opportunity of thanking them for their interest.

September 1947

C. J. GADD

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LECTURE I

THE GOD

IN all the polytheistic nations of antiquity the gods have a hierarchy. There is a king of the gods whose rule is introduced by successive generations of forebears, considered as presiding over a chaotic domain. When the divinity appears who is to obtain an eternal lease of the universe, the generations come to an end, though an unfulfilled heir is sometimes left, as most clearly seen in the case of Marduk and his son Nabu. The latter remains equivocally as the successor without ever coming to the throne, because the creation of man had by that time taken place,¹ leaving Marduk in his supreme position indefinitely. A similar awkwardness might have arisen in Egyptian religion with Osiris and Horus, but it was got over by relegating the father to his realm of the dead, allowing the son to reign over the earth.² It was never enough for a god to rule purely in heaven—he must be king of gods and men as well, or he were unimaginable. When the divine ruler is established, the family patrimony, understood as the world with its appended skies above and regions beneath, is arranged and henceforth kept in order by co-operating wisdom of a creator and service of his creatures.

Supremacy over the gods is found to be attained by two roads, mythologically and by earthly process. The myths of Egypt, Babylonia, the Hurrians, Ugarit, and even what can be dimly perceived of an earlier Israel display the supreme god winning his way to the throne by battle, often by violence against family predecessors, which generally involves horrific and obscene incidents.³ In these struggles the defeated powers

¹ This is the explanation of the difficulty felt by S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian akītu-festival*, p. 194 f.

² A. H. Gardiner, *Attitude of the Ancient Egyptians to Death and the Dead*, p. 12.

³ It is enough to mention the various disgusting accounts of the combats between Horus and Seth, Ea and Apsu, Aliyan-Baal and Môt, and the Hurrian legend of Anu and Kumarbi (E. Forrer in *Mélanges Franz Cumont*, ii. 691 ff., and H. G. Güterbock in *Orientalia*, 1943, pp. 344 ff.; also *Kumarbi: Mythen vom churritischen Kronos* (1946), p. 7. The idea that a conflict precedes creation can be criticized in detail as concerns the Babylonian stories (see L. W. King, *Schweich Lectures*, 1916, p. 114 f.), but the other mythologies prove that it was considered generally as a necessary episode. Compare the election of a king by the Vedic gods in order to prevail over the 'Titans'; A. M. Hocart in *The Labyrinth* (ed. S. H. Hooke), p. 266.

are identified with the chaos and darkness over which they reigned, so that after their downfall the universe can be formed into the state in which it is seen to exist. The other way of a god's winning supremacy depends upon historical process. Gods come to be esteemed the head of the pantheon when their country or city obtains ascendancy over its neighbours, and the custom of earth is then faithfully mirrored in heaven. Amun and Ashur (and, in his time, Marduk) are the common examples of this. But the merely political explanation is subject to one proviso and capable of one extension. The proviso is that the local god must already have played upon his own stage the part which he will henceforth take for the nation—Ashur did not simply appropriate the functions of Marduk, but had always possessed them for the behoof of his own people. The extension is, that early history may itself have become, or at least contributed to, myth, as perhaps in Egypt, where the conflicts of Horus and Seth have been viewed by some scholars¹ as vicissitudes in prehistoric struggles between the northern and southern kingdoms.

The sovereign over all gods ought to enjoy unchallenged authority, but this is so seldom realized in the world that it was not easily imagined in heaven. Though there is no parallel in the older mythologies to the Greek idea that Zeus himself was subject to an overruling Fate,² yet supreme gods, like earthly rulers, could not sit secure from disobedience and revolt among their own kind, and later were threatened even by their own creatures. In Babylonian mythology Ishtar threatened Anu, the bird Zû stole from Enlil the talisman upon which his sovereignty depended; in the stories from Ugarit there is not only the alternating strife of Aliyan-Baal and Môt, but the revolt against Baal of the lords of the Sea and the River, and in the Old Testament the reference to the fate of 'Lucifer' is the most familiar of all. In Egypt the divine supremacy was exposed to a more dangerous diminution than the idle repute of legend. It is true that there went a story of Ra growing so old and decrepit that men were moved to a conspiracy to cast him from his throne; this recoiled fatally upon the rebels, who were slaughtered by the goddess Hathor.³ But the other

¹ See most recently, A. H. Gardiner in *JEA*. xxx. 23 ff.

² The suggestions of C. F. Jeremias in *MVAG*. 1922, ii. 35 are unconvincing, and the statement of A. Jeremias in *Der Kosmos von Sumer*, pp. 18, 19, unsupported.

³ Similarly, the myth of Horus of Edfu describes the subduing of the

prejudice to the god's esteem in Egypt was more actual though perhaps unrealized; it lay in the existence of a present divinity on earth, the Pharaoh. In possession of a supernatural person, a god by birth and in plenitude of power,¹ dwelling among men even if removed from them, the Egyptians of necessity felt that the other gods less intimately concerned them. This human instinct to value most the god within nearest reach and most accessible to petitions may be seen at work in the tendency to bring gods down to earth, then out of their houses, then into the parish and the home, and last even on to the person (which will be noticed later²) as much as in the ode of Hermokles³ addressed to Demetrius Poliorketes; the sentiment is natural, not consciously blasphemous. How real and dangerous to the gods was the rivalry of the king appears most vividly in the spells of the Pyramid Texts, where his 'double' is represented as uttering outrageous threats of slaughter and worse against the gods if they presume to oppose his entrance among them. This indeed concerns the dead king, but it shows clearly enough how powerful a distraction to the faith of the people was a divinity of their own kind.

With the ordering of the world went the creation of man. There is a great unevenness in the ancient accounts of this process; the first discrepancy is in the time of it. In the Egyptian stories there is hardly a note of this, and man appears as a casual act of the god's will, together with the rest of the world, and without clear motive. By contrast, in the Babylonian accounts man was created in consequence of other existences, and it was his function to master these so that the god's convenience might be served; the same is true of the creation in Genesis. A different scene appears in the myths of Ugarit. These move almost wholly upon the divine plane, but men⁴ appear in them, even separate human characters, Keret and Dan-el, yet there has been found no story of creation. None

enemies of Ra while he was king upon earth. Hathor's slaughter of mankind is paralleled by Anat's in the Ugarit stories (Virolleaud, *La Déesse Anat*, p. 13 f.).

¹ Even over the forces of nature, as was believed; see G. A. Wainwright, *The Sky-religion of Egypt*, p. 16.

² Lecture III, p. 66.

³ Which has been rather hardly characterized as 'perhaps the nadir of human religion', W. L. Knox, *Schweich Lectures*, 1942, p. 37.

⁴ These texts already use 'dm in the sense of 'humanity', and in one place El is called their 'father'; see J. de Groot in *Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur R. Dussaud*, i. 69; H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Keret*, p. 8.

the less it may be anticipated that there was in Phoenician legend a point when men were created because this act is so prominent in the cosmogony attributed to Sanchuniathon.¹ According to this the first human pair of beings succeeded an evolution of natural conditions² culminating in the union of a wind with its wife, from which proceeded Protogonos and Aion. The latter 'discovered the food obtained from trees', which may be a hint of the story related about the diet of our first parents³ in the garden. This leads to the observation of a second feature in the stories of man's creation, the usual omission to be plain whether the first humans were male and female. Protogonos and Aion are not called man and woman, but they had offspring of the two sexes, and if either of the pair was woman it must have been Aion, though neither the Greek word nor its Semitic equivalent⁴ is feminine. In Genesis the woman is an afterthought⁵ in what is considered the earlier account. The Egyptian⁶ and Babylonian creation legends similarly omit to specify that the first upon earth were male and female.⁷ At the most, it is left to be assumed from their standing

¹ In the fragments of Philo of Byblos, preserved by 'that Eusebian book of Evangelic Preparation, transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenish obscenities to receive the Gospel', i.e. Eusebius, *Evangelica Praeparatio* (ed. E. H. Gifford). The passages in question are Book I, pp. 31 ff.

² O. Eissfeldt, *Ras-Schamra und Sanchuniaton*, p. 84, considers that this is due to Philo himself who, being a 'Euhemerist', was unwilling to admit that the gods were in existence before men. Others may think this style very characteristic of the Ras Shamra texts, and therefore, inferentially, of Sanchuniathon. What might be a comment of Philo is the curious phrase about these first beings, that they were 'mortals, so-called', as though unwilling to admit the common belief that they were different from their divine predecessors.

³ M. J. Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques* (2nd ed.), p. 413.

⁴ 'šlam. For a suggestion concerning 'Protogonos', see Virolleaud, *Syria*, xv. 247².

⁵ An interesting but speculative explanation of the forming of Eve out of a rib, through a deliberate or accidental ambiguity in the sense of a Sumerian word, seems to have occurred independently to several scholars; see last S. N. Kramer, *BASOR.*, Supplementary Studies, no. 1, p. 9, also H. Holma in *Orientalia*, 1944, p. 225. An objection is that in the Sumerian myth the birth of Nin-ti is only one among eight, not distinguished like that of the first of all females. In favour, however, is a point which Kramer has not made clear—the births of the eight deities were probably births from different parts of Enki's body; see *JAOS.* lxvi. 266 f.

⁶ E. A. W. Budge, *From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt*, p. 434: 'men [and women] arose from the tears', &c. The women are, of course, an insertion. A more recent translator, R. O. Faulkner in *JEA.* xxiii. 172 (cf. xxiv. 41), renders 'that is how men came into being'.

⁷ In the fragments of an Old Babylonian version of the Atrahasis story,

as successors to the divine pairs which preceded their generation, such as Shu and Tefnut, or Lahmu and Lahamu, and from their being ancestors to a bi-sexual race. Typical in this respect is a Sumerian myth, which is provided with an Akkadian translation and a curious accompaniment of groups of signs, only partially explained at present,¹ which may have something to do with an early theory about the origin of language.² The story begins with the work of the gods in setting out the physical order of the world, and proceeds to the creation of man from the blood of two Carpenter or Craftsman gods. A human pair was created, having the names Annigarra and Ulligarra, whose significance has, at least, no apparent connexion with sex. Here, as so constantly in the oriental legends of man's earliest days, the emphasis rests upon the skills which empowered him not simply to support and adorn his own life, but more effectually to work for the gods.

After creation of an ordered world and of its inhabitants the gods parcelled out the domain among themselves, under their established chief, the creator. An early Sumerian deluge-story³ tells of the existence of five cities, Eridu, Bad-tibira, Larak, Sippar, Shuruppak, and their division among the principal deities. These were named because they were the seats of the prediluvian kingdoms, but there were other cities of still greater fame, each in the keeping of a different god. The supreme god installed himself in possession of the universe, but of an earthly seat as well. He next allotted fiefs to his peers, to each one a city with its human inhabitants. The accounts of creation are unanimous that its purpose was to provide for the service of the gods, particularly in the two essentials of housing and feeding; most is heard about the first

translated by E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*, p. 177, the seven women who were formed did not belong to the first creation, which was of one being only, *lullú* (p. 172 f., ll. 7, 13).

¹ Ebeling, *KAR.*, no. 4 and a duplicate, see S. Langdon, *Le Poème sumérien du Paradis*, pp. 44 ff. Upon the accompanying signs, B. Landsberger in the Oppenheim Festschrift (*AfO.*, Beiband 1), p. 170.

² *Iraq*, iv. 34. The notion of 'father' and 'mother' as the first utterances of new-born children might have been illustrated from Isaiah viii. 4, 'before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother'. Similarly, as Mr. S. Smith has reminded me, in the Ugarit text *Syria*, xiv. 130, ll. 32 ff., a being cries twice 'father' and 'mother' (cf. H. L. Ginsberg, *JRAS.* 1935, pp. 54, 66), and, most recently, J. A. Montgomery in *JAOS.* lxii. 49 ff.

³ A. Poebel, *PBS.* iv, no. 1.

of these. The Babylonian stories harp upon building with a notable persistence,

'That he may lay the brick of our houses in a clean place.'

(*PBS.* iv, no. 1, p. 13, col. i. 8.)

'Come, let us found a shrine, an abode for thee.'

(*Creation Epic*, vi. 40.)

'Then was Eridu created, E-sagila was built.'

(*CT.* xiii. 35, l. 12.)

The possession of a temple, i.e. a dwelling-house, was, in fact, the prime necessity for a god once he came to live in a civilized community.

This process of a god settling down can be observed in two or three instances. The first is in a Sumerian religious poem¹ which describes the god of the heretofore nomad Amorites taking his place in decent society among the Babylonian gods. All the rest, he observed, had wives and establishments; he alone seemed an outcast. He therefore besought his mother to find him a wife, which she did, obtaining the daughter of a neighbouring god, whereupon he had a house built in the city of Ninab and installed himself as the lord of that place. From a passage at the end of this poem it appears that herein a glance is cast upon the traditional barbarism of the Amorites, long a horror and derision to the civilized townsmen of Babylonia. With the institution of an Amorite dynasty as lords of the land it was symbolic and necessary for their national god to adopt polite usages and to have wife, house, and city in his possession. A similar story found among the myths of Ugarit concerns the building of a house for the god Baal.² But though Asherat is persuaded to travel upon her ass to El for the purpose of pleading that Baal may be allowed a house, it is not clear why he had not one already 'like the gods' or 'like thy brethren', and the story has a mythological purport, in which the inclusion of windows in the house plays a significant part. It can only be guessed, therefore, that Baal's lack of a house meant, in this case, that he was a new-comer.³ Lastly, there is the most familiar example, the God of Israel.

¹ E. Chiera, *Sumerian Religious Texts*, pp. 15-21.

² C. Virolleaud in *Syria*, xiii. 131 ff.: a recent translation by C. H. Gordon in *Orientalia*, 1943, pp. 42 ff., and a discussion of the mythological ideas by W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 88 f. The best example of abundance bestowed through windows (the same word as at Ugarit) of heaven is the scoff of the royal groom in 2 Kings vii. 2.

³ A different reason is suggested by U. Cassuto in *Orientalia*, 1938, p. 270.

Having long dwelt and moved with his people, owning no more than a portable shrine, when that people was securely established in the lands of the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Hivites, and Jebusites, themselves settled nations with town-dwelling habits, and when the Israelites, too, had so far adopted their modes of thought as to raise up a king (amid much obloquy from partisans of the old ways), it was soon mooted that God ought to have a house.¹ David was not allowed the privilege of supplying this need, but Solomon was. He applied to Hiram, as one long versed in the knowledge how this thing ought to be done, and for the skilled labour to execute the work. From the heathen point of view Yahweh would thus be acting in the recognized way for a god who had abandoned the tribal way of life and had moved into settled quarters. The great difference between this and the two preceding instances lies in its historical setting. In Syria the transformation had occurred in time so remote that it had become legendary, in Babylonia it may be viewed only as reflecting a national consciousness.

City life was a necessity for gods who had any pretensions because it was a necessity for their worshippers. In the ancient civilizations there can sometimes be detected two strata of religion, one plainly displayed in the literatures, the other buried and emerging here and there only in small irregularities detected or suspected by modern research.² There is much in the official religions which is naïve and based upon the cruder human frailties, but they are not the religions of village primitives, and though development does not cease throughout the existence of these civilizations as known to us, the national modes of thought are already shaped at the beginning of true history when it begins to emerge from written monuments.

¹ Against this is the opinion that Solomon's temple was a private royal chapel, and thus secondary to the establishment of monarchy. This opinion was criticized by C. R. North in *ZATW.* 1932, p. 20, but has been restated by W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 139. If temple-building and king-making were not parallel developments, as here considered, the ideas of antiquity are better conveyed by one of the Babylonian stories of Creation (F. H. Weissbach, *Babylonische Miscellen*, 32 ff.); Enki, after creating gods to take charge of providing materials and maintenance, then created 'a king', for the normal purpose of directing the building. So far from its being the king's house he was merely the instrument used by the god in providing himself.

² See, e.g. G. A. Wainwright, *The Sky-Religion in Egypt*, p. 94 f., and S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian akîtu-festival*, p. 301 f.

They were shaped by the mould of contemporary life, the religion and the writing having evolved together out of the complex needs of living in great communities.

It is interesting to see this necessity reflected back from men to gods, conceived as living at a time before men existed. The purpose of creating man was that of the Egyptian noble who furnished his tomb with little servant figures which he had only to utter the spell to bring alive, for there was work to be done, and these were to ease the lord's shoulder from the burden.¹ How heavily this bore upon the gods before the expedient of creating human slaves was used is described in several places with a simplicity which verges on the ludicrous. The worst of all impositions was building; in the Creation Epic the Anunnaki-gods were to reward Marduk by building his house, 'the Anunnaki wielded the pickaxe, for one year they were moulding its bricks'. This was no work for gods, and Marduk, seeing their plight, was moved to decree 'that the service of the gods should be established, and themselves set at rest' by the easy sacrifice of one among their number, the guilty conspirator Qingu. In a similar vein is the story about the origin of the pickaxe² and how it came into the hands of men; Enlil had bestowed it upon the Anunnaki, but they immediately passed it on to the black-headed people to hold. In the bilingual myth already mentioned (p. 5) the function of the two created beings and their descendants must be to discharge the manual duties of the gods, to toil with the spade and basket at building work, to till the fields and to celebrate the festivals, nourishing the gods by their produce. This bilingual poem, as proved by the remnant of a 'catch-line' in one of the copies, was the preamble to an Akkadian myth long known in scanty fragments as the Atrahasis Epic.³ Its first line read 'when god (was) man', and this cryptic phrase referred to that primeval age when gods had to toil like labourers on their own building: 'man' is proleptic, the gods were what they afterwards created man to be. Building was hardest, but it was

¹ A good illustration of this phrase from Psalm lxxxi. 6 is given by the Ur-Nammu Stele from Ur (*Antiquaries Journal*, v, pl. XLVIII, and *Philadelphia Museum Journal*, 1927, p. 84 f.). The slave obsequiously relieves the weight of building tools upon the king's shoulder. In the 'great service against Tyros' commanded by Nebuchadrezzar 'every head was made bald and every shoulder was peeled', Ezekiel xxix. 18.

² See S. N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology*, p. 52.

³ A. T. Clay, *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform*, pp. 11 ff.; E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*, p. 172 f.; *Iraq*, iv. 33.

not all. If there were no men the gods would have to provide their own food, and even prepare it for themselves.¹ A fragment of Hittite myth² introduces the god Ea uttering the usual protest at the folly of exterminating men since the gods would thereby only deprive themselves. 'Shall it come to this', he exclaims, 'that the Weather-god himself . . . must wield the knife, that Ishtar and Hepat must themselves grind at the mill?'. Were they to be their own butchers and bakers?

Being, in consequence of the new invention, masters of their own cities and of the inhabitants, who now abounded,³ the gods' problem was to exploit their possessions. Two things were requisite for this: order and skill among the subjects. How the first was provided concerns the next lecture, the king being, as it were, the god's foreman among the labourers. The bestowal upon man of skills in various ways contributory to civilization is a notable chapter in the mythology of Western Asia. Its persistence among the various nations proves how essential this subject appeared; it proves a widespread awareness of the importance of technological progress as the means by which culture is advanced,⁴ and of the gulf between the citizen and the barbarian. Egypt was obviously less affected by these ideas, being neither much influenced by her neighbours nor having any clear notion of the rise of man. There the gods Ptaḥ and Thoth are variously attested as the inventors of arts, but casually and at no defined time. There is no attempt to build up civilization upon cumulative discoveries of the arts of living.

The best known of these lists of early inventors is in the fourth chapter of Genesis, which describes the descendants of Cain. Brief as it is, the three inventions represent agriculture and industrial pursuits and find place for the fine arts. These inventors were all human. A greatly expanded account on the same lines is given in the fragments ascribed to Sanchuniathon. According to him the various arts of civilization such

¹ A typical humiliation inflicted upon conquered rivals, such as the Elamite princes constrained to dress and serve up the repast of Ashur-bani-pal (C. J. G., *The Stones of Assyria*, p. 180, pl. 39).

² Translated by H. G. Güterbock in *Kumarbi*, p. 21.

³ In so much that their noise and importunity finally disgusted the gods, or the more imperious among them, and they resolved to destroy the creatures; Clay, *op. cit.*, p. 65, and below, p. 17.

⁴ A point much emphasized by archaeologists of our own day: V. G. Childe, *Archaeological Ages as Technological Stages* (Huxley Memorial Lecture for 1944).

as metal-working, building, navigation, agriculture, stock-rearing, justice, and writing (a larger sample than in Genesis of all human activity) were invented by men in successive generations, but these men are indistinguishable from gods, as indeed the two races, what with Sanchuniathon's tradition and Philo's prejudices, are nearly inextricable. It is not said what was the purpose of these discoveries; to serve a god may be assumed, but in effect they all go to build up the structure of human life in urban communities. A natural expectation that the original materials of Sanchuniathon might be found in the alphabetic texts obtained since 1929 from Ugarit (Ras Shamra) has not been fulfilled in respect of this list of inventors of the arts, but a figure which is prominent in both suggests that the invention-story was included in the mythological stock of Ugarit, out of which we have, of course, only chance samples. This is the god Khusôr,¹ the arch-craftsman or Hephaestos of the gods, who reappears as one of the most prolific artisans in Philo. There is an oddly circumstantial parallel with this in Babylonia. A celebrated fragment of Berossos² (again preserved only at third hand by Christian writers) relates the instruction of mankind in the civil arts by the amphibious daemon-figures of Oannes, Annêdotos, and their brethren. There can be no doubt that this story also, though preserved only by a fragment of a late and non-extant Greek author, is original and ancient, but it is far more surprising that the thousands of cuneiform tablets as yet examined have contained nothing of it. And whereas Khusôr is securely identified, Oannes, Annêdotos, and the rest, notwithstanding various proposals, still await their original forms.

Yet if Berossos's account of the bestowal of the arts upon man is still unsupported by the (probably) Sumerian text from which he drew, its setting is clear both in place and time; it was the antediluvian period in Southern Babylonia, when kings (not gods)³ reigned for fabulous ages in those cities which

¹ See S. Smith, *JRAS.* 1945, p. 188.

² See P. Schnabel, *Berosos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur*, pp. 253, 262, also 135 ff. The idea of ancient inventors and benefactors of the human race,

inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artis
quique sui memores aliquos fecere merendo,

was familiar also to the Greeks; see Jacoby, art. 'Euemeros' in Pauly's *Realencyclopädie*, vi. 1, col. 970, who, however, appears to believe that it originated from the fifth-century sophist Prodikos. Similar inventions are ascribed by Persian legend to the reigns of primeval kings; see Hastings, *Encyclop. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. vii, p. 722.

³ With one exception, see below, p. 17, n. 2.

the gods had portioned out among themselves after the creation, and now sought to suck advantage from by instructing their inhabitants. The last of these kings was Zisudra or Ut-napishtim, the Babylonian Noah, to whom Gilgamesh had afterwards to resort for a secret unknown to humanity. It was in this age, again, that one of the kings, Enmeduranki, was famous as the inventor of certain arts and insignia of divination, ever accounted the supreme science, and as the ancestor of the diviners' fraternity.¹ Indeed, there was preserved an omen of the entrails which had occurred in a yet earlier reign,² and there were potentates in the later rituals of magic and healing called the seven sages³ who lived before the deluge. A story not unlike that of Oannes and his companions is also told by the creation-myth already mentioned,⁴ where the god Enki, in order to have the materials for building and endowing a house, made out of clay first the Brick-god, then other such deities as the Copper-smith, Carpenter, Goldsmith, and Stone-carver, then afterwards those able to produce corn and wine. Though this list is confined to one set of needs,⁵ it is clear that there were others on the same lines for whatever was required—to relate the genesis of a thing was to prove that one understood its nature, and could therefore control it by magic. If Oannes is not simply a name or form of the god Ea (Enki), at least his epoch and activity correspond with what Ea was doing in the same mythical age, creating or dispensing the arts of living in communities.

The most instructive story of this kind is in a Sumerian religious poem which has lately been described⁶ by Dr. Kramer of Philadelphia, whose researches have done so much to re-animate this branch of ancient literature. Here is explained how the lore imparted by Enki to his own domain through agents like Oannes was finally acquired for the benefit of the whole country or, more strictly, of its divine landlords. In the possession of Enki himself, in his city of Eridu on the shore of the Gulf were all the institutions⁷ and arts which go to make up

¹ H. Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der babyl. Religion*, p. 116, no. 24, ll. 1, 23.

² E. F. Weidner, *MAOG.* iv. 227, and J. Nougayrol, 'École pratique des hautes études (Section des sciences religieuses)', *Annuaire* 1944-45, p. 8.

³ H. Zimmern, *ZA.* NF. i. 151; cf. E. Ebeling, *MAOG.* v. 3, p. 16, l. 22 f.

⁴ Above, p. 7, n. 1.

⁵ The source of Berossos's narrative was possibly a similar myth prefixed to a ritual of curative magic; the amphibious (fish-like) form of these beings suggests a connexion with healing and the casting out of devils.

⁶ *Sumerian Mythology*, pp. 64 ff.

⁷ These seem to be called *me*, and the same is implied by Kramer's translation

civilized life, as it was understood by the Sumerians. This god's daughter, Inanna, had her own city of Erech, and in order to magnify this her abode she decided that she must obtain those arts from her father, who was jealously guarding them for himself. She therefore journeyed to Eridu and was entertained there by her father; a banquet was spread, and Enki was overtaken with strong drink. Under this influence he resolved to hand over to his daughter some of his precious *me*, 'lordship, exaltation, godhead, the true and sublime crown, the royal throne'. Inanna quietly accepted these, and Enki, becoming extravagant, went on to a second gift, 'the sublime sceptre, the sublime alcove, shepherdhood, kingship',¹ which Inanna again took. So far she had secured the institutions and insignia proper to (a) her own divine state as owner of a city, (b) the kingship to be set up as the first requisite of its economy. After this more presents were showered upon her by the drunken father, and a long section of the text is occupied with a bald list of the multifarious arts and customs which Inanna thus obtained for the improvement of her own city. They are a strange jumble, but together they make up a respectable part of the whole body of notions upon which Sumerian civilization rested. There are manual skills such as writing, carpentry, music, metal, leather, and basket-work; there are various functions of kings and priests, and a number of concepts without special connexion such as wisdom, judgement, falsehood, destruction of cities, rejoicing, and enmity. All these things were taken into physical possession by the astute goddess and loaded into a boat, with which she travelled back up the river

'decrees', but I have much difficulty in reading the copy in *PBS.* v, no. 25. This word occurs, at least, in a repeated phrase (pl. xv, col. 4, l. 55, pl. xvi, col. 1, l. 35, col. 2, l. 34, col. 3, l. 39) (*d.*) *inanna me-sag-rig-ga-ni*, 'Inanna (did so and so with) the *me* presented to her'. But in another place (rev. i. 58) the word *ù-di* seems to describe the long list of privileges given to Inanna. Assuming that *me* is used (*ù-di* being possibly a synonym), the story throws light upon the meaning of this difficult word, which continues to be inconclusively discussed; see, most recently, *Orientalia*, 1945, pp. 22, 29 f. In one aspect the story illustrates the perfect concreteness of these things, which can be loaded in a boat, while at the same time the content of *me* shows that it might best be translated, here at least, 'powers' or even 'ideas'. For partial translations of *PBS.* v, no. 25, see S. Langdon, *Le Poème sumérien du Paradis*, pp. 222 ff., and M. Witzel, *Analecta orientalia*, no. 4, pp. 52 ff.

¹ The Sumerian king-list states more simply that, both in the beginning of things and again after the deluge, kingship came down from above. But this is only a summary observation, neglecting the details of its bestowal, which were not of interest to the list.

to Erech. The end of the story is grotesque, for Enki, recovering his senses and bitterly repenting his sottish liberality, sent his messenger hot-foot to stop the boat at various points where it must come to a halt, and to get the precious cargo back to Eridu. All was in vain, and Inanna reached Erech with the spoils of her cunning. From there, it may be supposed, these ideas were generally diffused and became the common property of gods anxious to improve and exploit the estates which had fallen to them at the division of the world.

It may not be unprofitable at this point to look back for a moment upon these legends which, whether preserved by original documents or by late writers in Greek, combine to make up a fairly consistent picture of the ideas entertained in Western Asia about the origins of divine rule. There were generations and conflicts of the gods, leading to the establishment of one as supreme. There was an act of creation, differing greatly in details, but leading to the invention¹ of man as a means of relieving the gods from otherwise unescapable toil, particularly in building their houses, a first necessity for any god with pretensions to quality. The multiplication of men led to the establishment of cities, which were portioned out among the brethren of the creator; from these and from their inhabitants the gods were to derive an existence of ease and plenty. In order that the creatures might be capable of their duties they must be given an ordered life and the skills necessary for sustaining a civilized existence, both for themselves and for the gods. The next stage, then, is for the gods to improve their patrimonies with these essential institutions; order is maintained by the appointment of a king, and skills are dispensed to mankind in a variety of ways. There are inventors, divine and human, special creations or special envoys, or else individual gods, as owners of unproductive estates, who are prepared to purloin these arts and implant them in their own cities. These events were imagined as occurring in an age of demigods or patriarchs with enormous lives. It has been observed that the tradition of Israel has a general conformity with this scheme: there was, it seems, some combat preceding or confirming the supremacy of Yahweh, man was created to till the ground and replenish the earth, there were half-divine inventors of the arts, and there was even a temple-building consequent upon God's settlement with His people in a land of fixed habitations, though this, in

¹ This is how it was regarded: *Creation Epic*, vi. 1, 'Marduk . . . applied his heart, formed clever (thoughts)'.

Israel's case, was transferred from remote legend to fully historical times. Egypt lay outside the ambit of these ideas—even creation was not much regarded there, and the arts were just the benevolent devices of gods, not moved thereto by any supposed interest.

Next, in order to have their wills done upon earth, the gods must be in communication with men. In no age or place has there been any lack of knowledge upon earth of what was willed in heaven; at least, there have always been persons able to inform their fellows upon this important matter, and generally willing to reinforce their doctrine by every sort of persuasion necessary to ensure its reception. In considering how this knowledge was imparted to the ancient peoples it will be necessary to make two reservations at the point now reached. First, the principal channel through which the divine purpose flowed into the minds of men was the vicarious will of the king, as the god's representative upon earth, and this theme is reserved for the second lecture. Again, this is not the place to describe what either kings or private people did to ascertain the divine pleasure. Here we are to see only how the god himself moved to influence his creatures.

In the age of legend there is little question of communicating with men, for gods are intermingled with them and the two races are hardly distinct. Men are fractions of gods, and gods behave exactly as men. This is the relation most largely preserved in, and best known from, Homer, where the occasional employment of dreams and omens seems merely an inconvenient substitute for direct speech. The various oriental nations have preserved in their literatures the memory, or rather the idea, of this heroic age,¹ but here or there it is more sharply defined. Least so in Egypt, where, although gods and demigods extended themselves to the verge of history as reigning dynasties, apart from this special function, which is purely formal, the gods were very little given to the society of men. Such allusions as occur are mostly *ad hoc* inventions, like the physical parentage of Pharaohs from mothers who have companied with gods, or the other familiar colloquies which the kings were for ever describing and depicting. In any case intercourse with Egyptian kings is not to be reckoned as with humans. It is in a mere story, the Tale of the Two Brothers,

¹ Not golden, at least according to the ages of Hesiod (*Works and Days*, ll. 156 ff.), but the fourth in order, which, exceptionally, was nobler than the preceding age of bronze.

that the Nine Gods meet with the human Bata and tell him of the enlightenment of his persecutor. The specimens of Phoenician mythology found at Ugarit show clearly enough that an age of mingled gods and men was familiar to the writers, although in what is known at present the events are nearly all upon the fully divine level, and may be mostly imagined as taking place before the effective appearance of men upon earth. There are but two exceptions, the stories which introduce the characters named Keret and Dan-el, with their families, and these move in the normal relation of acting upon the command of gods, directly received. That there was once much more of this in the Phoenician mythology is suggested by the fragments of Sanchuniathon, which reveal a world peopled by a medley of gods and men and beings whom it is impossible to distinguish as one or the other.

The Hittites of Asia Minor also had their stories of an age when gods walked together with men, for a god once called in human aid against his enemy.¹ The Weather-god having been wronged by the serpent Illuyankas, another deity called 'The Strong'² took up his quarrel, and this one seduced a mortal named Hupasiyas to secure the serpent when he had been enticed out of his hole.

With the patriarchs of Israel, and down to the time of Moses, God's earthly presence was not unfamiliar to men. He spoke to Adam like a benevolent proprietor as He walked in His garden at the cool of the day, He was present and visible at the sacrifice of Cain and Abel, He shut the door of Noah's ark with His own hand. Several times He spoke with Abraham at Sichem, Bethel, or Hebron, and He appeared even to Hagar at the water-hole. It was not always well to meet Him, for He had His whims with respect to men—'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious'.³ Thus He elected to prefer Abel before Cain, He slew Er the first-born of Judah, having taken a dislike to him, just as in a later age He was willing to spare Abijah the infant son of Jeroboam from the extreme fate denounced against the remainder of his house. At another time He was taken with a sudden impulse to kill Moses, and was restrained only when Zipporah circumcised her son. So highly did He delight in talking with Enoch that He at length took

¹ A. Götze, *Kleinasiens*, p. 131.

² Upon the Hittite reading of this god's name, see E. Forrer in *Mélanges Franz Cumont*, ii. 707 f., but Güterbock, *Kumarbi*, p. 87, n. 6, disagrees.

³ Exodus xxxiii. 19.

him away to heaven, as again He did, by a signal mark of favour, with Elijah. Yet in this same age of the Old Testament, as in Homer, there were communications from God to man other than by direct speech—it suffices to mention the dreams of Joseph and Jacob, much more the divining-bowl of the former. In both places these less-direct methods seem unnecessary and almost inadvertent.

The best-attested legendary age of the ancient East is in Babylonia, and the best illustration of it is, of course, the Gilgamesh Epic. The hero of this was two-thirds divine himself, and his adventures were with gods or figures of faerie, like Enkidu the half-bestial savage, the Scorpion-man, Humbaba the wild man of the woods, Ur-Shanabi the Stygian boatman, the Ale-wife in the enchanted garden, and his translated ancestor Ut-napishtim. Beside these spectre shapes ordinary men make but few and dim appearances,¹ as elders of Erech to give ineffectual counsel, or citizens to be oppressed by the heroic king, to fashion his weapons, or to be slaughtered in sallies against the Bull of Heaven. But amidst these supernatural gestes the gods are seen beginning to withdraw from the earthly turmoil. It is true that Ishtar solicits Gilgamesh in person,² and that Enlil with his own hand leads Ut-napishtim and his wife out of the ark. But the Sun-god, though he addresses Enkidu, speaks out of heaven, and when he is to be approached by the heroes they must use the mediation of Gilgamesh's divine mother Nin-sun, as though it were any mortal shown upon a cylinder-seal approaching a majestic deity under the escort of an appealing goddess. When Ea desired to give a warning to Ut-napishtim of the deluge, he addressed first the reed-hut and the wall, not the man himself. Though the reason for this was, no doubt, that Ea might have

¹ This is not to deny, what Kramer has rightly emphasized again (*JAOS.* lxiv. 7), that the surpassing merit of the *Epic* is in its human interest.

² The love of Ishtar, despite the contumely with which it was repulsed, was not merely an illicit passion. As king of the city Gilgamesh was bound in duty to espouse the goddess at the right time, and none could be mythologically more appropriate than at his return from victory over a giant (Humbaba). A wealth of evidence upon this function of the city-ruler has been gathered by Mrs. E. D. Van Buren in *Orientalia*, 1944, p. 35 f. The motive of a mortal spurning the love of a goddess has several well-known examples in antiquity—see W. F. Albright in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, xxxvii (1918), p. 116. Whether the colloquy of Anat and Aqhat in the Ras-Shamra story of Dan-el has this character is disputed; the latest commentator, H. L. Ginsberg in *BASOR.*, no. 98, p. 19, denies it.

the formal excuse of not having betrayed the counsel of the gods,¹ it was quite in line with the growing reserve of gods in their intercourse with mortals.

The unaffected companionship of gods with men might be found in a yet earlier Babylonian age. Gilgamesh was not merely the hero of a story but a character in formal history, one of a dynasty counted second to rule after the deluge. Before that disaster there were countless centuries when the land had been governed by ancient kings, each reigning for thousands of years, and only one of them called a god.² But this was the age when man was in his apprenticeship, and his rulers were the familiars of gods, knowing their secrets, receiving or inventing the arts of life, and instructing mankind in their behoof. The last of these was Zisudra of Shuruppak, who appears in the Epic as Ut-napishtim, the ancestor of Gilgamesh. He alone in his generation escaped the deluge, not so much for his piety as because he enjoyed the particular favour of a god. The deluge itself was a witness of the close association in which gods had lived hitherto with men, for it was decreed owing to the disgust which they conceived at the clamour and nuisance of men. Yet to destroy these would have been an act of headstrong folly, as the wisest god expostulated when the attempt had failed. For better or worse man was saved, kingship was bestowed anew, and the generations continued, though counted now in hundreds rather than thousands of years. Nor were the gods yet aloof, but in the days of Gilgamesh they had drawn off somewhat from the importunate society of their creatures, though demigods like Etana at Kish, and several at Erech in the next dynasty,³ had condescended to reign upon earth and thence to commune with the greater gods. But Gilgamesh was the last, and with him, as the divine nature was partly withdrawn, so was the divine society; gods and men began better to know their places.

¹ L. W. King, *Schweich Lectures*, 1917, p. 70 f.

² Dumuzi the shepherd, distinct from Dumuzi the fisherman, who was one of the First Dynasty of Erech, after the Flood. But it is possible that the first prediluvian king appeared in a theogony, for his name, Alulim, may be the same as Alala, the predecessor of Anu in a Hurrian myth as yet unknown from Babylonia; see above, note 3, on p. 1.

³ The dynasty of Erech was founded by a son of the Sun-god and included the divinities Dumuzi, Lugalbanda, and his son Gilgamesh. Lugalbanda and Enmerkar were the heroes of a Sumerian legend, where both of them are represented in converse with Inanna: described by S. N. Kramer, *Proceed. Amer. Philosophical Soc.* lxxxv (1942), no. 3, p. 320 f.

When the mist of legend had cleared and men found themselves living in merely human communities under human limitations, but believing that a god was the true ruler of people, land, or city, other means were found for this ruler to make known his desires. This stage begins with the emergence of historical dynasties in the greater kingdoms, these having no admixture of gods, nor reigns of superhuman lengths, and being represented by extant monuments. As definable points for this beginning we may take the unification of the two kingdoms in Egypt and the First Dynasty of Ur in Babylonia. But it is in Israel that the transition from direct to indirect divine government can be most clearly followed. There no monarchy existed until a later age, and all the wonders and deliverances, all the lawgiving, and all the introduction to the people's historic home were effected by God through human instruments chosen by Himself alone, without natural succession or legitimation, but by whom He so manifestly worked that their authority was accepted by the people. To Moses and Aaron, and to their successors Joshua and the Judges, God still spoke, but it was with a less and lessening intimacy than with Adam or Abraham. To Moses alone was vouchsafed some of the old free intercourse; the most striking example is in Exod. xxxiii. 7-11, where it is related that after Moses had gone into the Tent of Meeting, the pillar of cloud came and stood at the door of the Tent, while the people bowed down. Within, God 'spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend'¹—the description could not be more emphatic. But even with Moses the contact was generally more remote. Sometimes it was the 'angel of God'² who spoke to him, as in the burning bush or out of the cloud which stood between Israel and the pursuing Egyptians at the Red Sea. Generally, God was unapproachable, or to be sought only with extreme caution (as on Horeb, where Moses hid his face so as not to look upon God), and by one alone. The advice of Jethro (Exod. xviii) to Moses that he should appoint subordinate heads over the people to relieve himself of the throngs coming to 'enquire of

¹ Compare Num. xii. 8, and contrast Exod. xxxiii. 22 f., where Moses may look out from a cleft in the rock only upon the back of God as He passes by. The danger of meeting with God is mentioned above, p. 15.

² This intermediary becomes more frequent in the times of Joshua and the Judges. Inconsistency of usage has led to the belief that the 'angel' is an insertion unsystematically made by later revisers of the texts, who were increasingly offended by the thought of God having personal communion with men. But this also is in the development of ideas traced here.

God' about their affairs proves that Moses had a sole prerogative of speech with God, and the same is clearly indicated by the strife which arose between him and Aaron and Miriam (Num. xii. 1-8), who claimed that God had spoken also by them. The judgement was given by God Himself; He declared that while He would make Himself known to prophets by visions and dreams, He would speak face to face with Moses only.

The advice of Jethro looks back to the past age of God's governance; the rebuke of Aaron and Miriam points to the future. Moses was unique in so abounding with the spirit of God that he might impart it to others. He appointed rulers even over 'tens' of Israelites, and these were thought to have been endued with enough knowledge of God's will to decide minor questions formerly taken to Moses himself. On another occasion a distribution of Moses' gift was made by God Himself, when He came to the Tent of Meeting where Moses and the seventy elders were assembled (Num. xi), and 'took of the spirit that was upon him and gave it unto the elders', so that 'they prophesied and did not cease'. But it was the end of an epoch;¹ no prophet (says the writer of Deut. xxxiv. 10) had been like Moses 'whom Yahweh knew face to face'. In later days God stood farther off, and His word was precious. His judgement of Aaron and Miriam revealed that the future belonged to the prophets and the diviners by intuition or material aids.

His withdrawal from direct intercourse with men became marked during the period of the Judges, who were precursors of the Kings, under whom it ceased entirely. Against the few instances of God appearing or speaking to the successors of Moses there are far more of messages sent by the angel. Joshua, as the legatee of Moses, was most often distinguished by this divine favour, but even he could not depend upon revelation; an emissary of God, the captain of his host, appeared to him at Jericho, but the guilt of Achan had to be revealed by drawing lots, and the Gibeonites were suffered to be successful in their fraud because God was not specially consulted, and would not condescend to give a warning unasked. To the Judges there

¹ Later ages, without the warrant of Moses, have often claimed his inspiration; '(Le pape) interrogea le cardinal Pacca, Que feriez-vous?, lui dit-il. Levez vos yeux au ciel, répondit le serviteur, ensuite donnez vos ordres; ce qui sortira de votre bouche sera ce que veut le ciel' (Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, Livre premier).

were scarce any¹ appearances of God Himself. He spoke to, but not with, agents such as Deborah (who, as she appears in the story, was rather an inspired leader, a 'judge' herself, than a prophetess), to soothsayers who also dwelt under trees (Judges ix. 37), to men of God² like him who foretold to Eli the doom of his house, and to bands of prophets like those encountered by Saul, itinerant dervishes intent upon their religious exercises.

Of the prophets of Israel, the characteristic instruments of God's rule in the Old Testament, there is nothing to be said here beyond a repetition that, whatever the physical or sub-conscious experiences under which they delivered themselves, they were quite independent both of material medium or acquired learning.³ In this respect they may be regarded as out of the main current of their age. The progress of divine revelation (i.e. of ideas about it) has been seen to consist in the slow withdrawal of the god's presence, and when only his will can be known but his face no longer seen, at first his voice can still be heard resounding through corridors chosen by him. At length this, too, recedes, and nothing can then be perceived of him but signs, 'he leaveth countless tracks behind him, yet passeth out of sight'. Oracles and prophecy tend to harden into practices of formal divination.⁴ But these never obtained any great prestige in Israel, and the words of God continued to be proclaimed by His chosen servants in an age when, elsewhere,⁵ they could at most be elicited by special observances such as incubation or ritual. As untaught men, the choice of prophets by God was untrammelled. Once the call came the elect man must go, however unsuspecting (Amos vii. 14, 15), however conscious of unworthiness (Isa. vi), however distrustful of his own visions (Jer. xx. 7-10)—the contrast with the carefully selected, long-trained, deeply learned, and

¹ Judges vi. 11 (Gideon), xiii. 3 (the mother of Samson).

² The 'men of God' extended, of course, into the monarchy and culminated in Elijah and Elisha; see H. Duhm, *Der Verkehr Gottes mit den Menschen im Alten Testament*, § 11, and p. 61 for the comparison with dervishes.

³ A. Guillaume, *Prophecy and Divination*, p. 108.

⁴ According to a quotation from a book not available to me, Albright has expressed the opposite opinion (*From the Stone Age to Christianity*, p. 230), that there was a shift from traditional learning in the Bronze Age to ecstaticism in the Iron Age.

⁵ A specific reference to consulting a god through 'seers and calculators (?)' has been pointed out in the inscription of Zakir, a local ruler of Hamath at the end of the 9th century B.C.; see S. A. Cook in *Cambridge Ancient History*, iii. 375.

confident *barû* of contemporary Babylonia is extreme. It is true that the message of the prophets was such as could never have been compassed in an omen-text which, whatever the scope of matter adjusted to its form,¹ had no capacity for the themes and manners which have been variously unravelled from the rich web of Hebrew prophecy.² Particularly alien to the spirit of the formal diviners was the denunciatory tone and political criticism of the prophets. In the greater kingdoms even oracles, ecstasies, or dreamers probably delivered no more, according to what evidence there is, than a guess respecting a particular enterprise, or even a fiction to adorn a result already consummated. There is little or no trace of anything being conveyed adverse to the ruling policy, and it is not impossible that formal divination, with its short hedging sentences, came to be preferred as lending itself to the necessary vagueness and chicanery better than outright pronouncements, however obscurely worded.

Most of the ideas of God's governance described in these paragraphs belonged to the age before there was a king in Israel. The contrast was extreme with the far older cities of Babylonia. Kingship there had been established since a time so remote that later generations were constrained to count it in thousands of years, and it was thought of as almost coeval with creation itself. This made some difference to the ideas of communicating between gods and men. It has been noticed above that the Babylonians had a legendary epoch of free commerce between the two races, which ended with Gilgamesh in the second dynasty after the Flood. Even while that period lasted the gods, it seems, would not always speak unprompted, and the method by which this backwardness was overcome is perhaps connected with the existence of a king. The elaborate science of divining by the entrails, which scarcely ever cast a glance at any clients below princes and commanders, was invented by and for kings of the antediluvian age, and some specially remarkable signs observed in that immense antiquity were handed down to the latest records. On the other hand, kings could not supply the place of Moses and those subsequent leaders to whom God spoke less and less often and intimately, as to human instruments chosen by Himself. Babylonian monarchs make great claims of divine favour

¹ See Lecture III, p. 79.

² For a recent summary and discussion see S. Smith, *Isaiah* xl-lv (Schweich Lectures, 1940), p. 9 f.

and choice; they are sons, nurslings, even husbands of goddesses, but do not exhibit themselves (like the Pharaohs) in colloquy¹ with gods. Leaving aside their artificial divination, they had three ways of hearing the will of heaven: by oracles, through inspired individuals, and by god-given dreams. Of the oracles a good deal is known from the many examples which survive from the reigns of the last Assyrian kings. They were invoked sometimes by questions in writing, and delivered by priestesses, but we do not know much about the procedure and the circumstances. Their contents are fulsomely reassuring, a character which they have in common² with all the divinatory pronouncements served up to Assyrian kings, and in strong contrast, as remarked above, with the tenor of prophecy in Israel. The inspired individuals were the *mahhû* who delivered their messages in a state of frenzy,³ seeing visions beyond mortal ken; they would now be called shamans. We have no specimen of their utterances, nor idea of the subjects in which they most dealt.

A like reliance upon the spoken word of clairvoyant persons was to be found among the Hittites, though their mediums seem to have been less dramatic, for they attended particularly to the revelations of old women, and sometimes these were rather repositories of traditional wisdom, like 'the old woman Tunnawi' who prescribed a ritual for the treatment of sexual impotence,⁴ than sibyls or witches who might have obtained their knowledge not from a god but through illicit and pernicious discourse with the dead.⁵ Such crones also presided over one of the forms of divination practised by the Hittites and pro-

¹ Although they go very far in hyperbolical expressions of the god's favours to them. Bur-Sin called himself 'beloved son of the Moon-god' (*CT.* 36, pl. 2, rev. 1), Ur-Nammu was considered the 'brother' of Gilgamesh (*PBS.* x. 2, p. 134, 16 and H. de Genouillac, *Textes religieux sumériens*, no. 12, l. 112), and so was Šul-gi (see *AASOR.* xxiii. 26). Even Hammurabi called himself the 'twin brother' of the god Zababa (Introduction to Code, col. ii. 56 f.). The more intimate relations with goddesses, as 'husband' or 'nursling', were established by the position which kings occupied in the sacred marriage ceremonies.

² See Lecture II, pp. 42, 55.

³ See *RA.* xvii. 120, obv. 6; E. F. Weidner in *AJS.* xxxviii. 189, and the note by S. Langdon, *JRAS.* 1932, p. 391 f., which do not add much to our knowledge of these men's activities and messages.

⁴ A. Götze, *The Hittite Ritual of Tunnawi* (American Oriental Series, vol. xiv).

⁵ See Additional Note A (p. 88), 'On the Necromancy of the Witch of Endor'.

nounced the doom indicated by its obscure rites.¹ But in a desperate situation the king prayed for there to be vouchsafed a 'divine man', a man of god or prophet, so that he might declare what were the sins for which the land had been so sore afflicted with a plague.²

For the Egyptians transmission of the divine will was not, for a long time, the subject of ideas so definite as those held in Western Asia. The present divinity of the king must have made it seem less important to be in touch with some remoter authority, and it is evident that, especially in the earlier ages, most matters regarding the purpose of the gods were announced by the king, or those who spoke in his name. Nevertheless, when examples of divine choice are recorded it is made by oracle. The election of the god Amun was prominent in the dynastic affairs³ of the New Kingdom, being proclaimed, naturally, by those who purported to be its objects. Hatshepsut and Thothmes III both gave out that they had been granted signal marks of favour by the gods,⁴ the first for her expedition to Punt, the latter in being expressly designed for the throne; he relates how the god, on the occasion of a public religious celebration, went out of his way to confer upon the young prince his emphatic choice. There is a significance in this, for it has been suggested⁵ that the god always gave his oracles during a procession, when he was being carried on the shoulders of his priests: he could indicate choice or assent by a nod, no doubt easily contrived, and refusal or dissent by a 'recoil', the bearers starting back. The matters decided by Egyptian oracles were more varied than in Assyria. They intervened in the highest affairs of state, in the succession of the Eighteenth Dynasty, or in promising, for example, a life of 200 years to Rameses III—the failure of this did not apparently much affect the god's credit, for the son of the deceased put into his father's mouth a prayer⁶ that the 200 years should simply be transferred to his

¹ O. R. Gurney, 'Hittite Prayers of Mursili II' (*Liverpool Annals*, xxvii. 89).

² A. Götze, *Kleinasiatische Forschungen*, i, p. 219, 3, and Gurney, *op. cit.*, p. 27, 20; see also Lecture II, p. 38.

³ As it was in the later Ethiopian dynasty at Napata, according to Diodorus iii. 5, § 1.

⁴ A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, p. 154.

⁵ J. Černý, *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, xxx (1930), 491 ff. The subject has been further examined, and many of the questions to the god translated, in two later articles by the same author, *ibid.* xxxv (1935), 41 ff., and xli (1942), 13 ff. In xxxv. 56 he attempts to show that assent also was given, not by a nod, but by a move forward.

⁶ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, iv. 141 (cf. p. 89).

successor. But at about this time and later the god was required to concern himself with much less exalted affairs. He was called upon to decide upon the ownership of disputed property or the identity of a thief,¹ and his authority was freely abused to sanctify ordinary transactions; a will of the Saite period² is cast in the form of a decree by the god, speaking in his own person and denouncing curses against any transgressor of its terms.

Of prophesying, that is, declaring of the god's will by specially inspired or chosen persons, little is heard in Egypt. The wonder-worker who went on from his uncanny exhibitions to foretell before King Cheops the future of the royal family is only fictitious, and in any case a mere magician. There is nothing prophetic about the Admonitions of a Sage, or even the 'predictions' after the event of the priest Nefer-rehu; they are rather moralists, which is much in the Egyptian tradition, than prophets, which is not. That Israelite prophecy was inspired by Egyptian example is a very improbable supposition.³

The other means by which gods revealed their wills directly to men was universally accepted, and no age or nation even up to the present day has altogether slighted the guidance of dreams. But there are several distinctions to be made in the ideas of antiquity upon the significance and usage of this medium. The dreams themselves were of two kinds, plain or allegorical, and both of these could be experienced in two ways, spontaneously or solicited. A like division could be made of the dreamers: most often the dream concerned the man who beheld it, but antiquity was well acquainted with vicarious dreamers, persons who claimed to be specially gifted in this kind of perception, and undertook, for reward or the hope of it, to have and interpret a dream bearing upon the affairs of somebody else. A further distinction to be made here is arbitrary; for the present only the dreams sent to rulers will be considered, leaving something to be added in the third lecture upon the meaner concern of private men in this form of revelation.

¹ The questions addressed to the god translated by Černý in the articles aforementioned all relate to the petty interests of a workmen's village.

² A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, p. 316.

³ This has been maintained in several places by E. Meyer, see especially *Sitzungsber. d. Königl. preuss. Akademie d. Wiss.*, Jahrgang 15, p. 303, and cf. A. H. Gardiner, *JEA* i. 100. Böhl, in *Nieuwe Theologische Studien*, 22 Jaargang, p. 311, asserts that ecstatic prophecy was brought into the Orient from Greece.

The first observation to be made is that the exalted ones of antiquity had little taste for puzzles in these communications. By far the most prolific in dreams which need interpretation is the Old Testament; Joseph and Daniel, to look no farther, owed their fortunes to interpretation of symbolic dreams. Elsewhere such posers are far to seek. The Egyptians, though they had their 'House of Life',¹ a college of savants who studied this art, have not recorded a single dream sent to or concerning a king which did not declare plainly what it signified. The same is true of other peoples; several dreams are related² by the Hittite king Hattusil III, one of them seen by his wife. They all present the conventional theophany in which the god utters flattering speeches of encouragement, sometimes requiring a boon at the king's hands,³ on the eve of decisive events in his career. This style is best known⁴ from the inscriptions of Ashurbani-pal, which describe several military crises when his sycophants,⁵ and once the whole army,⁶ alleged they saw gods appearing or working to assure the king of victory on the morrow. Different in tenor, as being commands, but equally plain in purport were the visions sent by Marduk to Nabonidus,⁷ and by El to Keret in the Ugaritic story.⁸ In fact, the celebrated dream of Gudea, in which the god exhorted him, with a little transparent imagery,⁹ to build a temple, is the only example on the other side, and though it needed a goddess to expound this to the pious or artful governor, the problem would hardly have

¹ In the late period, at least (see Battiscombe Gunn, *JEA.* iv. 252, and J. Capart in *Chronique d'Égypte*, no. 36 (juillet 1943), pp. 259 ff.), dreams seem to have been studied in these institutions, of which a full description from the texts is given by A. H. Gardiner, *JEA.* xxiv. 157 f. See also below, Lecture III, p. 73.

² A. Götze in *MVAeG.* xxix (1924), 3, pp. 10-11 and ff.

³ F. Sommer in *Kleinasiatische Forschungen*, i. 340.

⁴ But it is, of course, much older; the earliest example seems to be a dream of Eannadu recorded in a broken passage upon the Stele of the Vultures. See F. Thureau-Dangin, *SAKI.*, pp. 12-13, col. 6.

⁵ The dream of Gyges (Rassam Prism, col. ii. 95 ff.) reads like the fiction of an ambassador. One dreamer saw an encouraging message written on the base of the Moon-god's statue (*ibid.*, col. iii. 118 ff.), another told of the appearance of Ishtar in full panoply, comforting the king by word and gesture (Ashur-bani-pal, Prism B, col. v. 52 ff.).

⁶ Rassam Prism, col. v. 97 ff.

⁷ S. Langdon, *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, p. 218 f.

⁸ Even gods themselves were informed by dreams, as in the poem of Aliyan Baal; see the translation by C. H. Gordon in *Orientalia*, 1943, p. 38 f.

⁹ A fair parallel is the dream of Penelope in *Odys.* xix. 536 ff.

taxed a Joseph or a Daniel. Perhaps the Old Testament here gives untypical examples. In general it was not thought safe or seemly to believe that gods should express themselves in riddles where the highest concerns of their earthly agents were in question. The like more venturesome imagination is indulged by Herodotus in his account of the forebodings of Astyages as to his destined supplanter.¹ But M. Aurelius, in thanking the gods 'that remedies have been shown to me by dreams, both others, and against bloodspitting and giddiness',² was in the strict tradition.

A second observation will illustrate several of the varieties noted above (p. 24) in dreams as a channel of divine ordinance; it will give a plain message, will be sought by incubation, and will concern the dreamer himself, who was also a king. But it will show a new aspect—the dream as a kind of ordeal. It has been proved³ that the well-known experience of Thothmes IV at the Sphinx, where he left a memorial, was not peculiar to him, but shared by other members of his dynasty. The stele set up by Amenophis II says expressly that he 'stayed at the sanctuary of Harmakhis until that had happened which his father Ra ordained for him'. In the like place Thothmes IV relates that he slept in the shadow of the Sphinx and heard the voice of the god Khepri declaring that the sleeper was his beloved son in whom he had all faith, and then demanding that his image should be cleared of sand. It is also evident that the incubation-rite succeeded certain exploits of the prince with the chariot and bow, and in the pursuit of wild animals.⁴ These feats appear to have been initiatory; they displayed the young man as qualified physically and morally to be king. The god, having taken account of all this, could then decide whether the aspirant was in every way acceptable to him. The dream was a final test, and the king's declaration that he had received therein the divine approval set a seal upon his legitimacy.

Having now touched upon some ideas of the ancient world as to the means whereby gods acted upon the minds of men and imposed their will, we may turn to the effect of this. What was the outcome of their government, the condition of their

¹ Herodotus i. 107 f.; doubtless a Median tradition.

² Book I, at end: George Long's translation.

³ In an article by B. Bruyère, *Chronique d'Égypte*, no. 38 (juillet 1944), pp. 194 ff., from which this description is taken.

⁴ An Assyrian parallel is revealed by the letter Harper, *ABL*. 366. The god Nabu, as heir to the divine kingdom, after his sacred marriage with the goddess Tašmetum, went out into the temple-park and hunted wild oxen.

kingdoms? The question belongs, in its moral form, to an advanced stage of human reflection, but its origin is primitive. The savage looks to his god for certain benefits and is willing to pay the appropriate price in service to the god and observance of his whims. Otherwise the god is liable to suffer drastic admonitions¹ for remissness. As thought develops it becomes evident that the god cannot be coerced, but man perceives even more clearly the ills that surround him, and asks why they are caused or permitted by the power to which he is subject. Is the divine ruler good and wise? What has he done to justify his supremacy? The only partial aspect of this ultimate question which need be considered here is: How did the gods of antiquity reply to the charge of misgoverning or neglecting their domains? That they were conscious of the accusation is proved, in a supreme example, by the Book of Job—that they were at no great pains to rebut it is plain from the last chapters of the same. Slight as the excuse is, there are no others in the ancient literatures delivered by the god himself. In the few but notable works of divine questioning that these contain the apology as well as the charge is left in the mouths of men.

But, according to ancient ideas, the god was not at the end of his resources when he had answered out of a whirlwind, spoken through prophets, or inspired human advocates; he might still resort to writing. One of the most curious practices of oriental antiquity was the writing of letters to gods. The most important of these were the Assyrian war-dispatches sent by the kings as letters to the god Ashur² informing him of the victories of his arms under the king's command. But even private persons of quality wrote petitions to the gods,³ and a

¹ Familiar among primitive peoples, this menacing of the gods is found in Egyptian religion: see G. A. Wainwright, *The Sky Religion in Egypt*, p. 32 f., and A. H. Gardiner, *The Attitude of the Ancient Egyptians to Death and the Dead*, p. 17, n. 27.

² These are noticed again in Lecture II, p. 61.

³ The only example known to me was found at Ur (unpublished). It is addressed to the goddess Nin-tin-u-ga by Inanna-kam, daughter of Enlil-á-mah. She offers to build a shrine and promises her humble service, 'in thy house let me be a sweeper of the court [cf. Psalm lxxxiv. 10] let me stand before thee', and prays that 'my foot may stand in the place of life'. The Sumerian letter published in *ZA. NF. x. 1 ff.* and others mentioned there are not letters to gods, but to kings, couched in a style of extravagant 'oriental' compliment. They were admired compositions studied in the schools, as is proved by tablets which contain collections of these gems, composed by courtiers and officers of the IIIrd Ur, Isin, and Larsa dynasties. A bilin-

like practice is attested among the Jews of a much later age.¹ That a reply should be written to such as these could hardly be expected, but there is at least one example² of a formal approval of the Assyrian king's operations and a receipt for the booty. Occasionally the god might go farther than this, and bestow a kind of testimonial upon kings. The self-laudatory hymns written on behalf of certain Babylonian rulers sometimes introduce a deity declaring in his own person his choice and approval of the prince.³ If this were put into writing it would be a divine rescript. A fragment of a school pupil's copy-tablet found at Ur preserves a few lines of a testimonial furnished by a god to some king, 'I am the god who favours his majesty, who establishes his foundation; he who lays the base of his priesthood am I.'⁴ This was very well for the king, but contained nothing that was necessarily creditable to the god, nor is it known whether he wrote it himself. Marduk, at least, was prepared to set out his *res gestae* for general scrutiny. Among a collection of copies of old inscriptions, made for the royal library at Nineveh, is found one⁵ of this god himself—'I am the god Marduk, the great lord' it begins, and goes on to announce that it is he who continually visits all the lands from sunrise to sunset. In these travels he went to the Hittite country, set up his supreme throne, and dwelt there for twenty-four years. During this time he established caravan-traffic between that land and his home, and introduced the merchandise of

gual letter of this style has been found at Mari, addressed to the local ruler Zimri-Lim, *Syria*, xx. 100 f., who himself wrote a letter to the River-god, accompanying a gift and imploring his favour, *Syria*, xix. 126. The unique imprecation KAR. no. 373 (see B. Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien*, ii. 241) addressed to the god Ninurta has scarcely the form of a letter.

¹ F. Macler, 'Correspondance épistolaire avec le ciel', in the *Revue des traditions populaires*, 1905, pp. 65 ff. Unlike the dynastic Egyptians, who wrote letters only to deceased members of their own families, these Jews, at the beginning of the present century, addressed the national patriarchs buried at Hebron, and threw their missives into a hole in the steps leading up to the sanctuary. The same author also quotes curious examples of letters believed by certain Christians of the eighth century A.D. to have been written by Christ or the Virgin, and to have fallen in the midst of pious congregations.

² Lecture II, pp. 61 f. An oddity that may be noticed here is an incantation for curative treatment, prescribed in the form of a letter from the expert god Adapa, *RA*. xxvi. 80, no. 110, 1.

³ e.g. H. Zimmern, *König Lipit-Ištar's Vergöttlichung*, obv. i. 33 ff.; S. Langdon, *PBS*. x. 2, p. 182, rev. 8 ff.

⁴ Similar language is attributed to Yahweh, e.g. Psalms ii. 7, cx. 1.

⁵ K. 3353 &c., published by H. G. Güterbock in *ZA*. NF. viii. 79 ff., pls. III and IV.

Sippar, Nippur, and Babylon. Hardly anything more can be made out upon the broken tablet, but it appears that after these years Marduk returned to Babylon¹ and instituted a reign of justice and plenty in place of the strife and affliction which had prevailed in his absence. This fragment survives from a large tablet which was followed by another of similar content, for its first line began 'I am the god Shul-gi',² and this must have contained a like personal account of that divinity's reign. Slight in themselves, these remains are a much older parallel (and perhaps indirectly a source) for statements attributed to the celebrated Greek 'rationalist' Euhemerus. A Christian Father³ informs us that Euhemerus composed a history of Jupiter and 'others reputed gods' on the basis of sacred inscriptions 'which were preserved in the most ancient temples, and especially in the sanctuary of Triphylian Jupiter, where an inscription averred that a golden column had been set up by Jupiter himself, on which column he detailed his acts, that it might be a memorial to posterity of his achievements'. According to this authority, Ennius, the Roman poet, related⁴ that the same industrious god went round the world five times distributing realms to his relations and friends, and leaving behind him a train of civilization and prosperity.⁵ It would, no doubt, be an exaggeration to claim that gods were thus first impelled to record their achievements through criticism of the world under their governance. But this inventing of 'historical' inscriptions for them must have been occasioned by a particular movement in theological ideas, and it is not without significance that it seems to have arisen in the same age as the human apologies⁶ for divine justice.

¹ Some of his leisure there must have been spent in the scribal schools of humane letters, for his inscription is couched in the approved style of learned obscurity which probably indicates a Kassite date for the composition.

² The well-known king of the IIIrd Ur dynasty. In his lifetime he had given offence to Marduk, but had passed his reign as a god upon earth, and his inscription was thus not out of place in company with Marduk's. On earth he, like his father, had been called a brother of Gilgamesh, and son of Lugalbanda and Nin-sun (S. N. Kramer, *AASOR*. xxiii. 26).

³ Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.* i, ch. 11. Also, in more detail, Diodorus v. 46. sect. 7 and vi. 1, sect. 7.

⁴ After Euhemerus.

⁵ Similar journeys round the world are said to have been related by San-chuniathon concerning Astarte and Kronos; Philo in Eusebius, *Præpar. evangel.* i. 38, c, d, and see M. J. Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques* (2nd ed.), p. 436.

⁶ Lecture III, pp. 84 f.

Such was the career and such the rule of the gods, and so it should be for ever if human observance could make it so. But the ideas of early thinkers did not comprehend infinity: just as it is doubtful whether omnipotence¹ was in the scope of their conceiving, so the inability to exempt even gods from death lingered in their minds. There were generations of the gods, and if birth, then death, however vehemently the Ale-wife might exclaim that 'the gods gave death unto man as his portion, but kept life for themselves in their own hands'. With one kind of gods there is no contradiction, for dying was a necessary part of their function, and the implications of their mortality have been a familiar theme of modern research. But could the great gods also die? The distinction into two orders of deities as regards their mortality was not unfamiliar to the ancient world, though it became explicit only in the later age. There is a curious discussion in Plutarch² upon the possibility of oracles ceasing by reason of the decay of those mortal media through which they worked. One interlocutor says that Plato had furthered the understanding of this, but another rejoins that even more enlightening was the division by Hesiod between gods, who are immortal, and daemons, who are only very long-lived. In this connexion he quotes a poetic fragment replete with Hesiodic quaintness,³ in which a nymph explains that she and her sisters live ten times as long as the phoenix, which itself lives many multiples of man's life, as exceeded in 'geometric progression'⁴ by various intermediate creatures. The notion is reinforced by a verse of Pindar,⁵ who said that the nymphs live as long as trees. Sanchuniathon had long ago explained, if we are to believe Philo,⁶ that among the gods of Egypt and Phoenicia some were immortal, others not. The mortal were the gods of nature, the heavenly bodies, and the elements. Even earlier in antiquity the distinction of degrees in age of the gods can be found, for in certain places of the

¹ The god of Israel was not, in the earlier passages of the Old Testament, represented as omnipotent and omniscient: H. Duhm, *Der Verkehr Gottes mit den Menschen im A.T.*, p. 34.

² *De defectu oraculorum*, ch. 11 (p. 415 D).

³ Hesiod, fr. 171.

⁴ In the so-called *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*, 143-5, 'Homer' is made to intimate διὰ λογιστικοῦ προβλήματος the number of Greeks who went to Troy, 'but this', adds the author stolidly, 'is found to be an incredible number', and the text becomes defective in the effort to work it out.

⁵ Fr. 146. This, says Plutarch, is why they are called hama-dryads.

⁶ Philo in Eusebius, *Praepar.* i. 32 d-33 a.

Hittite texts¹ there are allusions to old gods, new gods, and 'lasting' gods.

All of these scattered indications prove how near to the ancient mind was the idea that even gods must die in the end, however far beyond imagination their span of life. Naturally, this end was farthest from being predicated of the greatest gods, but it brooded over them too. Certainly it could not be said that all the Egyptian gods were liable to death, and yet they could be represented by the Turin Papyrus as members of a primeval Egyptian dynasty, each succeeding the other as though upon the death of his predecessor, and similarly there was a story² that Ra had grown old and in consequence his subjects were plotting to depose him. This is strictly in accord with the now familiar custom of slaying or deposing a king when his powers fail. But in the same myth Nun is addressed as the eldest of all gods, and yet he lives still. The ideas are uncoordinated, mythology having no need of consistency; so, too, beside the ubiquitous figure of immortal Zeus, there exist stories of that supreme god's death and entombment. Even in the Old Testament an allusion³ has been detected to the possible death of Yahweh. This antinomy is most clearly defined with the great gods of Babylonia. Marduk himself, while definitely considered as the legitimate successor to, and final holder of, the supreme place among the gods, is yet found playing the part of a mere daemon, dying and resurrected every year to secure the continuity of the world-order. The same, in both respects, is true of the god Ashur in his own country. We may go even farther; a New Year festival is attested at other great cities, including Erech and probably Nippur, and the analogies of Babylon and Ashur plainly suggest that these rites included the death of the patron god. In that event, Anu and Enlil also died not merely in some inconceivable future but every year. Not only so, but they visited Babylon every year to witness the drama of Marduk.

¹ See O. R. Gurney, *Hittite Prayers of Mursili II* (*Liverpool Annals*, xxvii), p. 81, and the account of generations of the gods who have lived and died, E. Forrer in *Melanges Franz Cumont*, ii. 697 ff., H. G. Güterbock, *Kumarbi*, pp. 99, 103 n. 33.

² Erman-Blackman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 47 f.

³ In Habakkuk i. 12; see S. H. Hooke, *Schweich Lectures*, 1935, p. 56. In the Ras Shamra myths, beside the alternating deaths of Aliyan-Baal and Môt, there is found another passage vehemently expressing the belief that neither gods nor their offspring ought to die at all: H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Keret*, p. 26.

How much of immortality belonged to these gods who were the perpetual witnesses and participators of divine death? We need not be unduly puzzled by this seeming contradiction, even if we make no claim to understand completely the mind of those who entertained it without difficulty.¹ Something is explained, no doubt, by a combining of rites sprung from different needs.² But it is necessary to accept the fact that ancient worshippers did regard the annual deaths of supreme gods as no more than a natural feature in their victorious careers, which in no way affected their immortality, and still had room in their minds for a dimmer belief that the immortality might not, after all, be absolute.

¹ See I. Engnell, *Studies in Divine Kingship*, p. 9.

² As held by S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian akītu-festival*, pp. 301 ff.

LECTURE II

THE KING

GOD and king are two conceptions so nearly coupled in the oriental mind that the distinction is constantly blurred. We are told that among primitive peoples the god may be projected out of the king, and the king himself out of the supposed wielder of a particular power. Such may have been the remote origin of kingship in the great nations of antiquity, but all of these, when they come fairly into view, have in most respects passed far out of the primitive, and have formed intellectual ideas concerning the polity under which they lived in a condition most congenial to them. These ideas did not include that of political evolution, and therefore to understand their existing state was no more than to know how it had been ordered from the beginning.

There are interesting divergences in the beliefs of the ancient peoples as to the origin of their kings. It would seem an axiom that there must be people for a king to rule over, and thus creation of man must be supposed to precede everywhere the institution of kings. Yet in Egypt this is far from clear, for the stories of human creation are perfunctory and confused. The origin of men is, in the most explicit story,¹ ascribed to the god Ra—they came forth from his eye—and Ra was the first (or second) king of the two Egypts. In this view, therefore, kingship was divine and even preceded the appearance of mankind, an idea quite in harmony with the full and earthly divinity which never ceased to be a quality of the Pharaohs. It is well known that in Egyptian tradition 'dynasties' of gods and demi-gods precede the human kings on the throne, not of heaven, but of Egypt. The greatest gods, Ra, Shu, Geb, Osiris, Seth, Horus, and Thoth, appear² with the secular titles of 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt' and the conventional suffix 'Life, Prosperity, Health'. This kingship at a certain point devolved upon men without admixture of gods, but the anomalous residue of a divine man upon the throne was left by this process. Gods ceased to be kings, but kings were always gods.

¹ E. A. W. Budge, *From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt*, p. 434; R. O. Faulkner in *JEA*. xxiii. 172; H. Grapow, *Das 17. Kapitel des ägyptischen Totenbuches*, p. 31.

² In the Turin Papyrus; G. Farina, *Il Papiro dei Re*, p. 16 f.

The situation was less confusing in Babylonia. Earthly kingship was there a gift or invention of the gods bestowed upon the world for their own purpose, the ordering of men in cities as productive servants, and therefore logically consequent upon the prior existence of these creatures. The insignia of royalty originally rested 'before the throne of Anu',¹ which signified that the earthly was a counterpart of the heavenly monarchy, but distinct. The Egyptian confusion of leaving undefined whether it was gods or men who were reigning in heaven or earth was thus avoided. From this place in heaven 'kingship came down', according to Babylonian belief, and resided in turn at five or six of the oldest Sumerian cities, in each of which kings reigned for many centuries, each until the rule passed to another city. It was to have ended with the Flood, and perished with the whole of mankind. But a remnant survived to replenish the race, and the necessary institution of kingship had to be sent down again from on high. Up to this point the account, if fanciful, is consistent, but some confusion is admitted afterwards. Whereas all² the antediluvians were mortals despite their fabulous ages, after the Flood gods intrude here and there in the lists of rulers over earthly cities. Reigns are still, at the beginning, of enormous though diminished length, but the 'gods' do not in general live any longer than the 'men'. They were not the great gods themselves, as in Egypt, but that lower order of daemons or ἐσθλοὶ ἐπιχθόνιοι, such as Lugal-banda, Gilgamesh, and Tammuz, about all of whom there were legends, still available to us in varying degrees, which display these characters as typical denizens of an heroic world with gods and men 'frequent in converse close'.³ The Sumerian king-list appends to several of these names short notes of actions for which they were celebrated,⁴ but seems to have had no information about the kings before the Flood.

Gods were the first kings also in Phoenicia, according to the

¹ S. Langdon, 'The Legend of Etana' (*Babyloniaca*, xii. 11), ll. 11 ff.

² With the exception of 'the divine Dumuzi, the shepherd' who ruled over the city of Bad-tibira. Dumuzi, or Tammuz, reigned again after the Flood in the First Dynasty of Erech, where, however, he was called 'a fisherman'.

³ Applied in *Odyssey*, xix. 179 to Minos, who retired regularly for consultation with Zeus. Some other Greek references to this are given in *JHS*. 1943, 63, n. 77.

⁴ What is related of Meskemgasher, that he 'entered the sea', is verbally identical with what Philo says of Ousoös (εἰς θάλατταν ἐμβῆναι), but hardly signifies invention of shipping.

history ascribed to Sanchuniathon, but there had been many generations of men before there were kings (avoiding the Egyptian anomaly), and during these all the useful arts had been invented, neither by gods as in Egypt, nor given to men under the rule of kings as in Babylonia.¹ First to be kings among the Phoenicians were the gods Astarte, Zeus Demarûs, and Adodos, an oddly assorted trio, two major gods and a river deity² of local fame. But they were no more than the appointees of Kronos or El, and the account preserved by Philo discloses in fact that Kronos was the first king,³ and it was for him that Tauthos devised 'four eyes in front and behind' and 'upon his shoulders four wings, two as spread for flying, and two as folded',⁴ in order to mark his royalty.

Very different from all of these was the beginning of kingship in Israel, where it arose comparatively late in the people's history and may be viewed as a natural, even necessary, consequence of the adoption of settled life in towns, parallel with the settling of the national god in a fixed house. Both innovations mark the end of Israel's tribal history, and are complementary—the national god will henceforth have a representative on earth to govern his people, lead them in battle as his general, and exact from them the service which it is their duty to provide. It is this profound change which explains the hostility, overt or latent, which the Old Testament writers cherish against the kings.⁵ In one of the accounts of how the monarchy began (1 Sam. vii–viii, &c.), it is described in the most invidious terms as a wilful supplanting of God's own

¹ Reversing the order of the two essentials, organization and skill, see Lecture I, p. 9.

² O. Eissfeldt, *Ras Shamra und Sanchuniaton*, p. 148.

³ Also a travelling god, who bestowed kingdoms as he went; Lecture I, p. 29.

⁴ Philo's description of the supreme god has a bearing upon the representation of Marduk as having four eyes, a feature which has been denied by G. Furlani, *Studi e monumenti di storia delle religioni*, vii. 97, and *Analecta orientalia*, xii. 154, 159, but at the cost of untenable assumptions. Four-winged figures are not uncommon; for Assyria see E. F. Weidner in *AfO*, xii. 230 f., and for other examples in W. Asiatic art S. A. Cook, *Schweich Lectures*, 1925, p. 52 and pl. ix. 11, 12.

⁵ C. R. North in *ZATW*, NF. ix. 34 argues, from personal names, that 'the religious movement that produced the monarchy was definitely Yahwistic'. But if this is true it could be only in the sense which he observes, *ibid.*, p. 9, 'that the Samuel party desired a king who should be subservient to themselves'. See also the same author's *The Old Testament Interpretation of History*, p. 98 f.

rule over his people, and though there is a more acquiescent (and reputed earlier) version (1 Sam. ix-x. 16), the odious light in which most of the kings are displayed by the selective descriptions of their reigns given by historians, and by denunciations of prophets, shows that prejudice was never overcome by the puritans. Kingship is said to be repugnant to nomad peoples, and there is evidence in Israel's own history to attest this feeling. Moses was accused by Aaron and Miriam (Num. xii) of claiming an exclusive privilege with God, thus exalting himself too high over the people, and the sedition of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num. xvi) was raised upon the cry that Moses was lifting up himself above the congregation. The story of Abimelech (Judges ix), who appears as a hateful character, is that of a man who tried to make himself a king,¹ at that time prematurely, and met the fate he deserved. But the drift was irresistible; the people at length insisted that they must do as their neighbours, and the zealots yielded the point with an ill grace, which set the tone of all the history of relations between the monarchy and the men of God, as it is related in the Old Testament.

Something of a like feeling may be traced in the Assyrians. With them, although the kingly office was very ancient, there was an extreme tardiness in admitting the name of king, which did not become firmly implanted before the fourteenth century B.C. Up to then the ruler's titles emphasized in different aspects his position as the national god's appointee and minister. A recent discovery² has revealed that the later Assyrians described their earliest princes as 'kings living in tents', and the same phrase, occurring at the end of Babylonian history in the cylinder of Cyrus,³ indicates that this means chieftains of desert tribes. By virtue of their longer history and their early contact with the Babylonian monarchies the Assyrians outlived these primitive prejudices more completely than the Israelites; they took hardly to the name of king, but did not maintain rancour against it as orthodoxy.

The gods having, according to the various notions, assumed, bestowed, or permitted kingship were acting with design. What they required from men was ease and maintenance for them-

¹ The statement (v. 22) that Abimelech was 'prince over Israel' seems to exaggerate his true position (see C. F. Burney, *The Book of Judges*, p. 267). It was possibly designed to vilify the institution in the man.

² The Khorsabad king-list; see A. Poebel in *JNES*. i. 252.

³ See upon this passage S. Smith, *Schweich Lectures*, 1940, p. 148.

selves, and their means of securing these was by giving the subjects arts to work with for the gods' benefit, and by preserving due order among them. If we add to the second of these the function of being a channel by which gifts accrued to the gods, we shall have summarized the intention of these in making kings over their patrimonies. The frame within which lives could be lived and arts exercised for the divine behoof was a settled society with regular institutions which, according to all ancient and some modern ideas, must be presided over by one. The most perfect examples of a polity devised to fulfil these conditions were the virtually independent Sumerian cities before the rise of Sargon. In these the whole of the land¹ and the inhabitants were the property of the god, who had only to enjoy his estate, it being understood that he would ordain the necessary conditions for its flourishing—as he would, if due regard were paid to his needs and preferences. The proceeds of land were the god's property, and industries were pursued in the temple precinct under a careful system of book-keeping to increase his profits. Out of these resources, as a common stock, were drawn all the commodities needful for the maintenance of the properties and the inhabitants. Over all these presided the *pa-te-si* or *ensi*, the governor of the city, who was its king in all but title.² Yet the title was of great significance, for as in a later age it fell to denote simply a military tenant under a secular king, in the city-states it laid the whole emphasis upon the governor's subordination to the city god, and his duty of cultivating the estate to produce revenues for the divine landlord.³ Though this economic system was modified, the same idea inspired the kings who in later centuries continued to pride themselves upon restoring temples and digging canals—they provided the gods with splendid houses and through their irrigations swelled the divine revenues by enabling the people to prosper. This simple notion of a people's well-being as a means of satisfying the god's needs is ingenuously

¹ This statement, in its absolute form, is denied by Landsberger in *Ankara Üniversitesi, Dil ve Tarih . . . Fakültesi Dergisi*, iii, no. 2, p. 154, but the distinction hardly affects the idea; see A. Deimel, *Šumerische Tempelwirtschaft* (Analecta Orientalia, 2), pp. 78 (3) and 80.

² 'Constitutional' theory awarded the title of king (*lugal*) to a city governor who had various degrees of pretension to rule over wider areas, particularly to the head of that city which formally held the 'kingship' by conquest: see R. Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté assyro-babylonienne*, p. 3.

³ F. Thureau-Dangin in *RA*. xxi. 2; S. Smith in *JRAS*. 1927, p. 569, and *Early History of Assyria*, p. 45 f.

expressed in some prayers¹ of the Hittite king Mursil II. The land had been for twenty years afflicted by a sore plague, brought on² by former wrongdoings in the royal family; for these ample atonement had been and would be made. Mursil depicts the havoc wrought among those who used to bring meat and drink offerings to the temples, and ends thus, 'but if he (the god) take not away the plague, and deaths go on, then even those few remaining who offered meat and drink shall likewise be minished from me, and none shall henceforth bring you meat and drink for sacrifice'—a quaint combination of entreaty and menace. The gods were in danger of forgetting their first interest.

That the people should stick to their tasks and be undisturbed was the next intent. As guarantors of this the kings were accustomed to proclaim themselves 'shepherds', combining the ideas of keeping sheep as an industry gainful to the god, and tending them for their own good. This is indeed an excellent term for the kingship understood as a balance and channel between gods and men. In Egypt it was scarcely used,³ but in Babylonia the 'shepherd' of his people is first found in the old Sumerian ruler Lugal-zaggisi, who prayed heaven that it might never revoke the fair destiny which it had decreed for him, and that he might always be the shepherd at the head of the flock.⁴ Gudea was 'chosen as the true shepherd of the land',⁵ and thenceforward this title was freely assumed by kings not only of Babylon but of Assyria as well. There are phrases which emphasize the authority of the shepherd over his charges—Warad-Sin of Larsa prayed for 'a staff to subdue the people',⁶ and a 'staff which makes the loyal men walk with one step'⁷ is claimed as a gift of god to the king Ishme-Dagan of Isin. In the other aspect there are many allusions to the benign care of

¹ A. Götze in *Kleinasiatische Forschungen*, i. 175, and similar passages in other prayers, *ibid.* Also O. R. Gurney in *Liverpool Annals*, xxvii. 27 and 37.

² Like the famine due to the guilt of Saul, 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

³ It is once applied, in a passage of obscure import, to the king or to Ra himself: A. H. Gardiner, *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage*, p. 78; see also Erman-Blackman, *Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 105, and J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought*, p. 211. J. Cerný in *Miscellanea Gregoriana*, 1941, p. 57, refers to a passage in which a queen is called 'image of the Good Shepherd', i.e. of a god (knowledge of this is owed to Mr. I. E. S. Edwards).

⁴ F. Thureau-Dangin, *Sumerische und Akkadische Königsinschriften*, p. 156 f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68, 3, l. 9.

⁶ Gadd and Legrain, *Ur Texts, Royal Inscriptions*, no. 127, l. 48. Cf. Psalm xviii. 47.

⁷ S. Langdon, *Sumerian Liturgical Texts* (PBS. x. 2), pl. xli, 10.

the shepherd; a blessing addressed to the king Lipit-Ishtar prays that he may guide the black-headed people as a ewe does her lambs.¹ It is needless to recall many familiar and touching similes in the Old Testament.

As the connecting-link between god and people the king was, in general, the priest, a character as hard to distinguish from the king as the king from god. The Egyptian king was himself a god, yet he was also high-priest, and in theory the only person in the land qualified to celebrate the rites of the gods. Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian rulers called themselves 'priest' as proudly as 'king', and, indeed, the last were priests or *iššakke* (the old title of god's agent on earth) long before they began to use the title of king. In no case was this an empty claim to an office of which the duties were all delegated. On the contrary, it might be wondered that priestly obligations gave the king any leisure for the needs of his office, or even for the common occasions of life. Such a situation has been observed in primitive peoples of recent times,² where the ritual duties of the king are so many and fantastic that not only has he lost all temporal authority, but his existence has become a burden, insomuch that none can be induced to take the office without compulsion. Something similar has been related of the Egyptian king by Diodorus,³ who depicts him as the slave of routine in the whole ordering of his life, and it is certain that, if he could be imagined as actually performing all the rites credited to him in picture and inscription, this would even fall short of the truth. Similarly there is a wealth of evidence for the religious obligations of kings in Babylon and Assyria. Not only are there the hemerologies, prescribing for the devout, and especially for the king, a host of burdensome requirements for every day, but the Assyrian letters and reports from diviners often convey directions for the king to carry out ceremonies of propitiation involving trouble and discomfort to himself. That the king submitted to much cannot be doubted. He may be found waxing impatient at the prolongation of a fast enjoined upon him by the experts; but they were inexorable.⁴ How far this responsibility disabled the monarch in his secular rule depended, of course, upon individual charac-

¹ H. Zimmern, *König Lipit-Ischtars Vergöttlichung*, col. i. 41.

² J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, iii. 17 ff., gives examples.

³ Book i. 70.

⁴ In the Assyrian letter R. F. Harper, *Assyr. and Babyl. Letters*, no 78, last translated by E. Dhorme, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, cxvi. 22.

ter. Feeble and sluggish natures may have found more than enough time abstracted from their pleasures by the mechanical performance of each day's divine service. But when Thothmes was subduing an empire, when Sennacherib was clambering among the mountains 'on foot like a wild ox', when Rameses was charging the Hittites single-handed, even when Hammurabi was sticking close to his chancery desk, there was no fulfilling of the day's religious stint by the king, and since it might not without dire peril be omitted, a deputy must have been found. Wars nominally waged by the king were often delegated to officers in consideration of ease, perhaps of religious scruple, and the converse must have been even more usual.

Closely intermingled as are the offices of king and priest, certain distinctions arise and develop in time from the delegation of sacred functions to a class of priests. In Egypt, even if the priests at last usurped the kingship this was but the temporary realization of a theoretical unity; the king was still supreme in the religious as well as the civil sphere. Likewise, the supremacy of the Assyrian king is clearly marked in the ceremony of his coronation,¹ even if priests found means to vex him in the strictness of the duties they laid upon him. But in the southern kingdom there are early signs of a growing priestly power, beginning with one Dudu, priest of the god Ningirsu, who assumed in the reign of Entemena² the title of *sanga* hitherto reserved to the king. How far this tendency prevailed cannot be traced in the history of Babylonia, and no doubt it fluctuated, but the annual laying-by of the king's crown at the New-Year festival and its re-bestowal by the priest is an effective contrast with the Assyrian crowning. In the neighbouring land of Elam the contrast becomes complete, with kings who were from the beginning, as it seems, subordinate³ to the *sukkals*, i.e. 'messengers' or apostles of the god. If more were known about these it might be found that their pretensions were not unlike those of the 'men of God' in Israel from Samuel onwards, prophetic claimants to a higher inspiration which entitled them to thwart or denounce the royal policies. The kings of Israel, despite their accession to the 'order of Melchisedek',⁴ had never been in strict theory high-priests, and had successfully

¹ See below, p. 49.

² F. Thureau-Dangin, *SAKI*, p. 34 f.

³ See G. G. Cameron, *History of Early Iran*, p. 71.

⁴ Psalm cx. 4. North (*ZATW.* NF. ix. 18 f.) has studied the priesthood of the Israelite kings, jealously regarded by the priestly class. Distinction between ruler and priest began with Moses and Aaron, and produced a

declined the attached burden of ritual observances. Viewed as a development of ideas, the cleavage of king and priest may result from the growing attraction of the king to human concerns, so that he might seem to wander away from the god until at length a more direct link was thought to be required.

Up to this point the purpose of kings as instruments of the god's rule has been considered, what their masters expected them to do and to provide. We now turn to their position in regard to their subjects, and duties towards these. It is not universally true that the 'oriental despot' was the untrammelled slave-owner of his people.¹ The degree in which their rule was absolute or oppressive was, of course, determined by the character of the monarch and his counsellors, but there were ideas and even institutions which bridled despotism. In theory there was no possibility of control over the Pharaoh, himself a god upon earth. That priests gained a short ascendancy by the use of oracles and amassing of wealth, or that the power of local potentates was ever menacing a feeble reign, are facts of history, but hardly count in a survey of ideas. But a neighbouring kingdom had some 'constitutional check'—among the Hittites the king was in a degree limited by a 'general assembly' of nobles and warriors² which maintained against him in particular the right of trial by peers, and of restraining him from jealous violence in his own family. They could exact even the capital penalty in requital of such murder committed wilfully. How necessary this was thought to be is proved by the supposedly implacable resentment of the gods, as revealed in the plague-prayers of Mursil II described above.³ The moment in the career of oriental princes when such family outrages were most to be feared was at accession to the throne, and the right of the nobles to avenge such crimes was extorted in return for their accepting the principle of nomination by the reigning king of his successor. They gained at least an assurance against the accession of one who should be simply the most formidable to his brethren and his servants.

Conspicuous among the states in which the absolute power clash immediately. J. Morgenstern (*AJSL*. lv. 14 f., 18 f.) regards Moses as initiating Aaron into the priesthood, but still in a subordinate rank. In any case, the distinction and the rivalry remain unaltered.

¹ S. Smith, *Schweich Lectures*, 1940, p. 32.

² Called *pankuš*; A. Götze, *Kleinasiens*, p. 80 f. A possible allusion to advisory rights of a *puḫrum* in Babylonia has been inferred from the omens by L. Oppenheim in *Orientalia*, 1936, p. 225 f., and the idea has been elaborated by T. Jacobsen in *JNES*. ii. 159 ff.

³ p. 38.

of the rulers was curbed were the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. When Saul was made king his mentor 'wrote in a book the manner of the kingdom' (1 Sam. x. 25), and Jehoiada made a covenant between the king and the people (2 Kings xi. 17); it is related also (1 Kings xii. 1) that all the people had come to Shechem to make Rehoboam king. But far more than such institutional checks, the whole force of public opinion worked against a human despotism, never forgetting that where God alone ought to be the ruler no man could claim more than a limited authority.¹ Tyrannical acts perpetrated by kings are related by the Old Testament historians merely to emphasize the instant rebuke and condign punishment which they earned from God by the agency of His prophets. The jealousy which had attended the setting up of Saul still watched the downfall of Zedekiah, and the procession of these Israelite kings is exhibited as a tale of harassed figures more often thwarted than patronized by the saints. 'Hast thou found me, O mine enemy' expresses more than a single relationship. Not infrequently the prophets appear as leaders of the opposition, thundering with complacent eloquence against foreign gods and nations indeed, but more often against the policies and manners of the court circles among their own people. Whether or no their rightness was so self-evident or their intervention so effective as represented, the idea of a king as normally subject to the censorship of divine emissaries is everywhere in Old Testament history. An effective contrast is the anxiety often shown by Assyrian interpreters of the divine will to explain away² for their master's comfort the threatening signs which they cannot deny having observed. It is characteristic of this difference between the temper of Israelite and Assyrian records that, while the first introduce but one Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, and denounce many more, the second preserve mostly the flatteries of those who were paid to prophesy good.

If only for the benefit of the god's estate the king was bound to do well to his people. But so narrow a conception could not long prevail. The notion of everything for the god might be thought nearest to practical embodiment in the old Sumerian

¹ The apparently similar and officially recognized standing of the *sukkal* in Elam has been noticed above, p. 40. On denunciation of kings by prophets see J. Hempel, *Politische Absicht und politische Wirkung im biblischen Schrifttum*, p. 12 f. They did not go so far as to call for abolition of the monarchy.

² Some examples are in the letters Harper, *ABL.*, nos. 137, 355 (see *Orientalia*, 1939, p. 306), 407; R. C. Thompson, *Reports*, no. 268.

cities, centred upon and living for a temple, yet it was in one of these that the first social reform was effected, by Urukagina, the god's 'agent' in the city of Lagash. From this early date onwards there was a succession of kings in Babylonia who were at pains to value themselves not only as conquerors of foreign wealth, pious builders, and promoters of overflowing prosperity, but also as upholders of justice and protectors of the weak. It was particularly in legislation that their solicitude issued. The Code of Hammurabi is the classic in inspiration as well as in formal jurisprudence. Its genesis and idea (which alone are relevant here) were set forth by the king in a lengthy prologue and epilogue. Anu and Enlil, the supreme gods, chose Marduk to be exalted over all the gods of the earth, and at the same time pronounced the name of Babylon as a decree that it should be the head of all cities. Therewith they called the name of Hammurabi 'so that I might cause justice to appear in the land and might destroy naughty and wicked men, so that the strong should not afflict the weak'. Later Marduk also delegated him for the same purpose, and thereupon he issued his laws. The epilogue¹ to the Code reiterates these ideas with much emphasis upon the divine commission to secure the happiness of his people and upon his own perfect fulfilment of the charge. The sculptured relief at the head of the stele is a pictorial summary of the leading ideas expressed in the prologue and epilogue²—the god extends, and the king piously accepts, the circlet and sceptre expressive of that sovereignty as a function of which the laws were given.

If it was generally accepted that the king ought to act beneficently to his land, this idea did not everywhere receive the same formal emphasis as in Babylonia. It is hardly possible to think that the earlier rulers of Egypt were solicitous in this point; there is more reason to believe that the Herodotean picture of Cheops and Chephren as soulless tyrants may be faithful enough to the reality of the age.³ A heightened sense of duty is no doubt found in the Middle and New Kingdoms. Kings are praised in hymns for their benefits to land and people,⁴

¹ Col. xxiv. 11 ff.

² See Additional Note B (p. 90), 'The Relief upon the Hammurabi Stele'.

³ By contrast with them Sneferu was exceptionally remembered in later ages as a sympathetic character: Gunn, in *JEA*. xii. 250 f. Some traces of social conscience in the Old Kingdom are examined in *AfO*. xii. 262 ff.

⁴ T. E. Peet, *Schweich Lectures*, 1929, 67 f.; Erman-Blackman, *Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, 278 f. See in general J. Baillet, *Le Régime pharaonique dans ses rapports avec l'évolution de la morale en Égypte*, i. 222 f., 252 f.

and the district governors of the Middle Kingdom show in their tomb-inscriptions that they had accepted this charge of protecting the subjects and took pride in having fulfilled it irreproachably.¹ But royal inscriptions very seldom proclaim, as often in Babylonia, that the 'shepherding' of the people was the prime purpose of the god in selecting such a one as king. The nearest approach to such ideas is made in the 'Instruction for King Merikara', where one section² includes maxims of justice and righteous governance. But later in the same document³ there is a picture of mankind as 'the cattle of god' being 'well tended' and enjoying the fruits of divine providence, as though they hardly needed further care from the king.⁴ It might be added that the Eloquent Peasant after all his exertions received no better guerdon from the king than a cold permission for the royal steward to see the man righted. An explanation of this aloofness is perhaps suggested by the inscriptions of the Middle Kingdom governors, and by the well-known charge which the king is represented as giving to these officers,⁵ in which the necessity of justice and benevolence to the people is urgently enjoined. The divine Pharaoh is rather in the situation of appointing deputies to rule justly than responsible for doing it himself. In this aspect the Egyptian deputies were more like Babylonian kings, both being appointees of a god with the duty of good government; but the Egyptians were one grade lower in the earthly hierarchy because their master was a grade higher than his Babylonian brother in the heavenly.

It is hardly surprising⁶ that the conception of a beneficent king is indistinct or absent in the Old Testament. This is quite consistent with the underlying rancour against the institution which is apparent continually from its foundation as an act of insubordination to God Himself and His established agent Samuel, through all the strictures of pious historians and the

¹ A. Moret, *The Nile and Egyptian Civilization*, pp. 236, 246.

² Erman-Blackman, *op. cit.* 77.

³ *Ibid.* 83.

⁴ A study of this expression is quoted in *JEOL.* no. 9, p. 34, under 43.

⁵ A. Moret, *op. cit.* 285, and *La Profession de foi d'un magistrat sous la XII^e dynastie*.

⁶ Although it happens that the most emphatic declaration of justice as the chief duty of a king is found in the West Semitic area. An episode of the Keret story, from Ugarit, includes this remarkable passage, as translated by C. Virolleaud in *Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur R. Dussaud*, ii, p. 758: 'Rends donc justice à la veuve. Nourris l'orphelin. Chasse l'oppresser, délivre l'opprimé. Sinon, descends du trône, et laisse-moi la place'. The latest translation (H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Keret*, p. 32) differs somewhat from this, but the sentiment is unaltered.

denunciations of prophets until the kings are finally extinguished amid the defeatist clamours of Jeremiah.¹ The programme of qualifications for a king (Deut. xvii. 14 ff.), beyond forbidding him covetousness of horses, women, and precious metal, does not concern itself with duty to benefit the people, save in so far as that follows from his being enjoined to study the law. There are references to kings judging Israel, but not to their promoting good laws or behaving with magnanimity; even the judgements of Solomon are not recorded with any purpose of displaying him as a father of his people. All the praise is reserved for conformity with the writers' idea of correctness in religious policy.

The realistic fictions of the Pharaohs as to the birth of destined kings leave no possible ambiguity as to their godhead from the beginning. Both in writing and picture there is explicit witness that the future king was the son of a god by union between him and the royal mother. After birth the child was received by gods and suckled by goddesses. Similar ideas of the birth and infancy of kings were indulged, in a less rigid form, by the royal houses of Babylon and Assyria. It was not uncommon for rulers of Sumerian cities to claim that a god was their parent (not a few similarly called themselves 'husbands' of goddesses),² and the belief of being nourished by the holy milk of a divine nurse was professed by rulers as far apart as Eannadu and Ashur-bani-pal. The difficulty of such ideas was that they were too precise and could prove very inconvenient at a change of dynasty. The ancient world set

¹ J. Hempel, *Politische Absicht und politische Wirkung*, p. 38. It has been suggested by several scholars that the VIth letter from Lachish, in which the writer complains of the despondency spread by the utterances of a prophet (?), refers to Jeremiah himself. But as the essential word is almost illegible, the charge may lie against either 'the prophet' (Jeremiah?) or 'the princes' (his opponents). Even if 'the prophet' be retained there is no necessity for him to have been Jeremiah, though the parallel is close (see D. Winton Thomas, *'The Prophet' in the Lachish Ostraca*, pp. 14-16). More than a thousand years earlier a servant had written to his master 'my lord knows how one man can affect the minds of many' (C. F. Jean, *Revue des études sémitiques*, 1941, p. 90).

² This mostly among kings of the Isin and Kassite dynasties, and doubtless in virtue of their performance of marriage-rites with a female representing a goddess, probably at the New Year. There is a realistic account of this concerning the king Idin-Dagan (see R. Labat, *Caractère religieux de la royauté*, &c., p. 248 f.) and some representation in art (H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, pl. xxix b, but it is not the 'divine couple' in the sense of his description on p. 169). A similar rite at Mari is suggested by G. Dossin, *RA.* xxxv. 1-13.

as great store as any later generation upon legitimacy;¹ but interruptions of the true line constantly occurred and, as usual, theory had to accommodate itself to the fact. The difficulty might have been felt most acutely in Egypt, but it is curious to observe there how the most rigid doctrine could not only tolerate change of throne but save its own appearance as well. There is a tale of the magician Dedi² who prophesied before King Cheops that there would be a new dynasty after the reigns of his son and grandson. This was brought about by the deliberate act of the Sun-god, who had companied with the wife of a priest just as he did normally with the reigning queen. This woman was to bear three sons destined by their divine paternity to be the first three kings of the new line. No doubt any intruder, provided he was successful in establishing himself, would be allowed a similar claim, and it has even been supposed that the detailed accounts of divine origin were emphasized only by those whose legitimacy was open to question.

Self-justification was easier for irregular occupants of the throne in Babylon and Assyria, where kings, though not averse from claiming divine descent, never committed themselves to the crude fiction of the Pharaohs, and thus gave wider scope to the volition of the gods. In the ancient lists of kings, apart from the constant shift of sovereignty from city to city, many kings are not related to their predecessors, and numerous usurpations are recorded, occasionally with a frank description of the new king as the 'son of a nobody', which did not always prevent him from enjoying a long and prosperous reign.³ In the late Assyrian period it is known that kings chose their successors from among their sons, not always the eldest, and this choice was the occasion of much heart-burning, sometimes even of domestic crimes. Such decisions were, of course, sanctioned by the gods, who were consulted by direct question whether it was agreeable to them that the prince named should be recognized as heir-apparent and as such should take up residence in the 'succession-house'. Doubtless it was rare to receive an unfavourable answer. But usurpers,

¹ A very remarkable testimony in the words of Diomedes to Agamemnon, *Iliad*, ix. 38 f.—'we honour your office, not your prowess'.

² Erman-Blackman, *Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 43.

³ A notable example is Nabopolassar, founder of a dynasty, who, with the pride of a self-made man, applies this invidious phrase to himself (S. Langdon, *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, p. 66, no. iv. 4). While in his nonage, as the son of a nobody, Marduk chose him for his piety and righteousness.

not needing to prove that the god was their father, had no embarrassment in alleging that he had been affronted by the unworthiness and impiety of the dispossessed and had therefore ordained the victory of the supplanter.¹ In the kingdoms of Israel and Judah the same motive is not left to be asserted by the new royal house; it is represented as moving God to reject and displace the unworthy by direct intervention.

Among another people the gods had greater regard for the claims of legitimacy. Although the kings of the Hittites may have been less absolute than those of other realms, and in their choice of successors partly dependent upon the assent of their subjects, yet the rights of the ruling house had been established by the decree of Telipinus,² and irregular successions were afterwards regarded as serious breaches of divine order. The accession of Subbiluliuma himself was brought about by the murder of one Dudhalia who was in the direct succession. This crime was punished by the visitation of a plague which endured for twenty years into the reign of Mursil II who was at extraordinary pains to end it by propitiation of the offended gods. A more ancient king, Hantil, came to the throne by a like murder—he was persecuted by failure and defeat, by the killing of his son, and at length by his own violent death. Hattusil III was another usurper in later times, and not only did he labour to excuse himself,³ but so strict were notions that his son Dudhalia cites the help given to his own father by a certain supporter as an offence against piety.⁴

Divinity of kings, in the lands outside Egypt, was a conception which fluctuated rather in show than in reality. The uncertainty noted at the beginning of this lecture is continually apparent; the king is always upon the point of stepping over into the god, and yet is always subordinate. This awkward suspense has given rise to much recent discussion of the actual divinity of oriental kings, which has been viewed in relation to the customs and beliefs of primitive peoples studied by anthropologists in our own age, while other scholars have more relevantly confined themselves to examining the language and

¹ These machinations are vividly exposed to us by the usurpation of Cyrus who, in addition to disparaging comparisons in his inscriptions, caused his supporters to circulate anonymous libels against the deposed Nabonidus; S. Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts*, p. 31 f.

² References in *ZA. NF. x.* 98.

³ A. Götze in *MVAG.* 1924, no. 3, p. 28, col. iii. 62 ff.

⁴ *ZA. NF. x.* 100.

rites of the ancient civilized peoples concerning their kings. This discussion can find no place here, but it may be said in general that the result is to find divinity constantly implied, seldom averred. In Assyria it was never claimed (indeed, the title of 'king' was assumed comparatively late), in Babylonia the sign of 'god' was added to their names intermittently by kings in only a few of the dynasties which arose in the land.¹ The Hittite monarchs, in the age when they were international figures, undoubtedly assumed the god in their ceremonial title 'my Sun-god', but this was perhaps no more than aping Egyptian usage. The truer level of belief is shown by the courtly phrase² for a demise of the crown—the late king 'became a god'. It is needless to say that such a presumption was (or ought to have been)³ unthinkable in Israel, where it continued to inspire horror under the foreign kings of the Seleucid and Roman periods, as dramatically attested by the judgement⁴ on Herod Agrippa, who 'gave not God the glory'. Even in the kindred world of the older Aramaic states of north Syria no specific divinity adhered to the king,⁵ only the divine appointment. In Elam it has already⁶ been noticed that the king was not even the immediate deputy of the god.

The idea of investiture by coronation prevailed throughout the Ancient East as it did in Europe, to which it has come down by an unbroken tradition through Church and State in the Middle Ages.⁷ The crown was not merely a symbol but an

¹ It was not used by Sumerian rulers of the early dynasties after the age of legend, who themselves lived under a strict theocracy: the only exception seems to be the obscure inscription of A-anni-padda in *JRAS.* 1928, p. 627. Introduced by the Agade kings, it was taken up again by those of Isin, by two of Larsa, and finally by some of the Kassites.

² It is true that isolated expressions can be found with a contrary implication, as when the king is called 'son of the weather-god' (E. Forrer in *Mélanges F. Cumont*, ii. 709). On the other hand, Muwatalli himself explicitly averred his human birth, 'I was the son of a mortal, but my father was priest of the Sun-goddess of Arinna' (see M. Witzel, *Hethitische Keilschrift-Urkunden*, p. 95—a reference for which I have to thank Dr. O. R. Gurney).

³ Again, unguarded expressions sometimes escaped which might convey the impious notion that God was the king's father. The most outspoken is Psalm ii. 7, which, with other like passages, has had to be explained away by commentators.

⁴ Acts xii. 22 f.

⁵ Euler, *Königtum und Götterwelt in den altaramäischen Inschriften Nordsyriens* (*ZATW.* 1938, p. 296).

⁶ Above, p. 40.

⁷ E. O. James in *The Labyrinth* (ed. S. H. Hooke), p. 257 f.

amulet with its own magical powers,¹ and so was the oil with which kings were anointed, perhaps in Egypt,² probably in Assyria³ and Israel.⁴ This unction of the Assyrian king may have been performed only at his coronation ceremony (if that was unique and not a periodic event), but a similar effect seems to have been expected from the smearing of a magic substance upon the king, his weapons, and his good genii, by winged figures who touch them with a cone fresh dipped in the contents of a small bucket:⁵ this is the ceremony so imposingly pictured in the sculptures of Ashur-naṣir-pal.

That coronation and anointing were sources of power is indicated by the supposed efficacy of repeating them at intervals. The best example of this was the Egyptian *sed*-festival which, whatever were its other ingredients, consisted principally in rites to enable the king to rule for 'millions of years'⁶—these were repeated periodically as a kind of jubilee. Similarly at the coronation of the Assyrian king there was a petition that the gods would suffer him to wear the crown for a hundred years. The Babylonian king had a peculiar annual repetition of his investiture. When, at the New-Year festival, all the institutions of the land were reinstated and, so to speak, recharged to continue unaltered for another year, it was necessary for the king to surrender his regalia to a priest and to make a profession of piety, after which the priest was authorized (but not obliged) to restore the emblems. Though this involves the idea of a renewal of power, as in Egypt, there is a sharp contrast in the obvious chance that power might be withdrawn altogether through the god's having conceived displeasure against him, so that he was subject in effect to yearly εἰσθυναί which, however ascribed to the god, were, of course, conducted by men. This was a situation far inferior to the Assyrian king. Upon him the crown was certainly bestowed by the hand of a priest, but only as the god's instrument, and the action was accompanied only

¹ A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, p. 56: the crown was one of the *me* purloined by Inanna (above, p. 12). David's appropriation of the crown of Ammon (2 Sam. xii. 30) was more than an act of spoil.

² The Amarnah letter no. 34, ll. 50 ff., is not very strong evidence.

³ K. F. Müller, *MVAeG*. xli, part 3, p. 9, l. 33.

⁴ Discussed by North in *ZATW*. 1932, p. 13 f.

⁵ See Additional Note C (p. 91), 'The Assyrian Cone-smearing Ceremony'.

⁶ A. Moret, *Du caractère religieux de la royauté pharaonique*, p. 256 f. The purposes of the *sed*-festival have been much discussed; it will be enough to mention A. M. Blackman in S. H. Hooke's *Myth and Ritual*, pp. 22 ff.; G. A. Wainwright, *The Sky-Religion in Egypt*, pp. 20 ff., with the references there.

by a blessing. There is no hint of conditions here, no need for the king to proffer a humiliating gesture, making him for the nonce an inferior, almost a suppliant. On the contrary, at once and in virtue of the newly conferred power, all the state-officers, the 'cabinet', resigned. It was they who doffed their insignia, they who were bidden to reassume them,¹ but evidently with a like possibility of being refused acceptance. More like the subjection of the Babylonian king to a regular, if ordinarily formal, censure was the situation in Israel where, according to the picture drawn by the Old Testament, the kings were at any moment in peril of rebuke and opposition, even of rejection, from those who proclaimed themselves the direct emissaries of God.

The ordinary communication of kings with gods was, of course, speaking to them, which in this special case is called prayer, and as, according to oriental ideas, gods are not to be approached with empty hands, prayer was always accompanied with sacrifice and ritual as well. It was not offered in the Christian spirit of resignation, but with urgency, and various means were used to make it effective. Primitive ideas that gods might be wheedled, bribed, cheated, or even cowed linger in the ancient literatures from the Pyramid Texts to Homer,² but such expedients were not for everyday use. Nevertheless kings, having to speak about more important matters than private men, used certain privileges to ensure themselves a hearing. They were able both to 'see' the god and were even admitted to share a meal with him³—there are references to this in the Old Testament. In offering prayer they sometimes used the device of bringing themselves nearer to the god's face and ears by standing upon a raised platform, where they are to be seen depicted in many sculptured reliefs and small carved objects,⁴ principally from Syria. The kings of the Israelites made some use of this aid to confidence with the deity when he stood

¹ The first appearance of a constitutional practice which has survived to our own time.

² The progress of sentiment in this matter is vividly illustrated by Plato's reprobation of such unedifying episodes.

³ Examples and references are quoted by S. A. Cook, *Schweich Lectures*, 1925, 39 f. An Assyrian text, published in *KAR*. no. 214, is an invitation to a great feast, sent to all the divinities of heaven and earth. It seems to have been issued by the god Aššur, or probably on his behalf by the king Aššur-eṭil-ilani, with a prayer for whom it concludes. This has been translated by Böhl, *JEOL*. Deel II (nos. 6-8), pp. 110 ff. and 761.

⁴ R. D. Barnett, *Iraq*, ii. 210.

'in his place' or 'by the pillar', but especially Solomon who 'made a brasen scaffold¹. . . and upon it he stood and kneeled down . . . and spread forth his hands towards heaven' (2 Chron. vi. 13).

According to Greek ideas of a later age theology was divided into three kinds, the mythical, physical, and political,² the last being the beliefs which were incorporated in a system of government. Political theology was, shortly, the theory of reliance upon divine revelation for the conduct of important parts of the state's business. Familiar from Roman constitutional practice, this consultation of divinity was of even greater moment in some of the oriental lands, being more consistently employed and perhaps less thwarted by political rivalries. The assumption upon which this rested was that the god was ready at all times to impart his will, and was indeed constantly signifying it by more or less plain indications, which could not be immediate only because he had withdrawn, since the legendary age, from direct communion with men. The less manifest these signals were the more care and art were required to receive them. One of the most urgent concerns of men must therefore be to study the means by which they were given.

These were conceived as very various, but the broad distinction of them may be drawn as revelation through men or through media to men—these two kinds have been called intuitive and inductive divination.³ The first includes oracles, dreams, and visions; the second every kind of sign given by non-human creatures and objects which, while behaving in manners characteristic of themselves, do this or that on a particular occasion because moved thereto by a god thus signifying his will. In some remarks⁴ upon the 'intuitive' method it has been noticed that these were more at home in

¹ The word used in this passage (*kiyyor*) has been probably derived from the Sumerian *ki-ur* (= Akkad. *duruššu*, for which see *Z.A.* NF. x. 24), the raised platform upon which a temple was built. It is singular, however, that both the Akkadian (*kiuru*) and Hebrew (*kiyyor*) loan-words can also denote a brazen vessel or container; W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, pp. 152 ff. and 216.

² The distinction was used by Varro in his *Antiquities*, according to Augustine, *de civit. Dei*, vi, ch. 5, and later by Eusebius in his confutation of the heathen belief in oracles, *Praep. evangel.* iv, *ad init.* It was probably first introduced by the Stoics.

³ Corresponding with Cicero's distinction (*de Divinat.* i. 6) of 'natural' and 'artificial' divination. Over-emphasis of this is ably criticized by W. R. Halliday, *Greek Divination*, p. 55 ff.

⁴ Lecture I, pp. 22 ff.

Egypt than in Babylon, the Hittites occupying a middle position because, while relying much upon the utterance of inspired persons, they were also enthusiastic disciples of the formal Babylonian methods. As seen in the Old Testament the kings of Israel made little use of artificial practices to ascertain the will of God. They were allowed (1 Sam. xxviii. 6) dreams, prophets, and the use of lots; these made manifest the guilt of Achan (Joshua vii. 14), chose the scapegoat (Lev. xvi. 8), and condemned Jonathan rather than Saul for transgressing a ritual prohibition (1 Sam. xiv. 41).¹ There are recorded occasions when Israelite leaders accepted signs either asked for, like that of Gideon's fleece (Judges vi. 36), or offered by chance like Jonathan's observation of the first words uttered by the Philistine garrison (1 Sam. xiv. 9, 10). But there is neither management nor need of interpretation in these.

The contrast is extreme between such unsophisticated methods, and the severe discipline of Babylonian divination in the service of government. The latter had its learned exponents belonging to an hereditary guild of vast antiquity, its voluminous scriptures and commentaries, elaborate rituals, and application to all the affairs of state. Since our concern here is divine guidance of kings by interpretation of god-given signs, we may confine our attention at present to astrology and haruspication, not to describe anew what there is no need to recapitulate, but to examine some of their relations and to consider a few particular aspects.

If it is impossible to decide which was the older of these two 'sciences', it is at least certain that inquiry by the entrails was in higher esteem at an early, even prehistoric period. A well-known passage in an Assyrian ritual text,² which ascribes the invention of divining to Enmeduranki, a prediluvian king of Sippar, omits reference to both astrology and the extispicium. Since these were by far the most important, this omission may be taken to imply that they were supposed to be already in use, for elsewhere³ is recorded a liver-omen said to have been

¹ This passage is now generally held to mention Urim and Tummim as divinatory implements; it has even been called (by C. F. Burney, *The Book of Judges*, p. 240) the *locus classicus* for this practice. Yet if the ground for this be examined (S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Heb. Text . . . of the Books of Samuel* (2nd ed.), p. 117) one might think the custom very feebly attested if this concocted text is its best evidence.

² H. Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der babyl. Religion*, no. 24, ll. 74 ff.

³ E. F. Weidner in *MAOG*. iv. 227; J. Nougayrol in *École pratique des Hautes Études, Annuaire 1944-5*, p. 8, no. 14.

observed under Enmeluanna, an even earlier king. Omens of this same kind accompanied the legendary exploits of Etana and Gilgamesh; the face of the ogre Humbaba¹ was actually seen in the convolutions of the intestines; the campaigns and fortunes of Sargon and Naram-Sin were viewed in connexion with the liver-omens which heralded them, and the collection of these signs proceeded through all subsequent ages² down to the extinction of cuneiform writing under the Seleucids. On the other hand, the first alleged astrological omen relates to Sargon, and the next is the celebrated doom of Ibi-Sin and the city of Ur. Despite the evidence that, in the late Assyrian kingdom, the heavens were as anxiously scanned as the entrails, all the indications are that until then astrology had been quite a subordinate factor in the conclusions which kings drew from natural data as to the will of the gods.

It was in Assyria that astrology became, almost suddenly, a serious competitor with liver-divination, and this was certainly no accident. One of the most prominent features of this astrology is the constant use of a geographical scheme for the interpretation of heavenly signs; according to the direction in which a sign was observed, or the segment of the moon affected by a partial eclipse, the consequence was to concern Akkad, Subartu, Elam, or Amurru, roughly the south, north, east, or west.³ While it is, of course, natural that geography should be projected from uranography rather than from other kinds of observation not depending on place, the almost complete absence of geographical application from the other kinds of divining is in very marked contrast. This scheme, whenever invented,⁴ was highly important for the policies of a wide-extended empire, as is constantly apparent in the astrologers' letters and reports to the king. It gave Assyria a definite place in the plan

¹ S. Smith in *LAA*. xi. 107 ff.

² Their arrangement into a series, called simply *barutu*, under subheadings of the principal features of the entrails, was probably undertaken in the Kassite, and perfected in the Assyrian period.

³ For full descriptions of this scheme and its variations see A. Ungnad, *Subartu*, pp. 69 ff. and A. Schott in *ZA*. NF. xiii. (47), p. 108.

⁴ It is not necessary to suppose that the Assyrians developed it for their own needs—they may have adopted it as the most applicable. The pre-Assyrian astrological omens are too few to date the introduction of the scheme. It is not in an Old Babylonian text (*ZA*. NF. ix. 308 ff.), nor in one from Nuzi (*RA*. xxxiv. 1 ff., but not in the Assyrian parallel either). It appears in the Kassite period (Clay, *UMBS*. ii. 12, no. 123), and also in the Hittite astrological omens which introduce some local variants, such as Nuḫašše, and 'the land of Ḫatti'.

of divine order which could be read in the stars, the Assyrians identifying themselves with Subartu, and reckoning the other lands as parts of their empire affected by the fortunes of the neighbouring hostile kings in those quarters. Moreover, this geographical scheme in which Subartu bulks so large perhaps reflects some real northern influence upon the forming of Babylonian divination as a whole. The indications¹ of this are so vague that it can hardly be discussed. Yet it may be significant that the Assyrians with their strong north-western affinities, and admitting so much influence from there into their art, were so conspicuously given to divination, and that the Hittites were by far the most ardent cultivators of these arts among all the neighbouring peoples, insomuch that they became the channel² through which these superstitions flowed to their later celebrity among the peoples of the west.

The extispicium was the concern almost exclusively of kings and leaders, and the same is, in a lesser degree, true of astrology, in which there are certain indications (apart from the weather-forecasts) of a popular aspect, which may be considered the forerunner³ of that interest which was dominant in the Hellenistic world. Even this is more than appears in the liver-omen texts. Apart from some clear allusions to the issue of a sick man's recovery or death, the intrusion of private interests is negligible. In the service of kings and commanders the answers sought were, above all, to military questions; 'my army' (or 'thy army')⁴ was the characteristic phrase of the interpretations, and this continued to be the principal reason for consulting the sacrificial⁵ oracle throughout classical antiquity. Besides the result of a combat, victory or defeat, pursuit or flight, there were many dramatic incidents portrayed in the consequences

¹ There is an interesting note to a tablet of bird-omens, copied in the reign of the Kassite king Meli-Shipak from an 'original of Subartu' (B.M. 108874 in *CT.* xl. pl. 49).

² See Additional Note D (p. 92), 'Liver-divination and Astrology in the rest of Western Asia'.

³ On this development from the Babylonian 'official' astrology see O. Neugebauer in *JNES.* iv. 15.

⁴ It seems impossible to detect any principle in the use of the three grammatical persons, which occur pell-mell in the apodoses, and sometimes are mingled in one omen.

⁵ We have no indisputable picture of the Babylonian *barû* at work. Usually quoted is the scene on the Ur-Nammu stele from Ur (*Pennsylvania Museum Journal*, xviii. (1927), opp. p. 86), and there may now perhaps be added a clay plaque in the Iraq Museum (*Guide to the Iraq Museum*, p. 96, fig. 72 (IM. 21305)).

of the omens, whether of the stars or the liver. Mutinies break out among the officers or the host, the king is faced with treasonable demands, perhaps the army deserts in a body and goes home. Much is heard of sieges and their incidents, and there was an ingenious, though absurd, method of calculating by observation of the entrails the length as well as the outcome of these operations.¹ But war was not necessarily the most hazardous situation for an oriental monarch. Even greater perils beset them in their palaces, and dynastic affairs took a place second only to military in the thoughts of those who interpreted omens. Every step of the king's career is foreshadowed; he is called by the gods, acclaimed by the people, attains the height of power or falls into scath, hides in his palace from popular hate, is deposed by his sons, by a usurper, or by his slaves, with the consequence of new strife and murders, while the old king, deserted by all, is reduced to beggary or slain.²

All of these prognostications combine to furnish information to the ancient inquirers, and to us, upon the means in view for the successful ruling of kingdoms. Nevertheless, the marked quality of the apodoses is generality, indeed vagueness.³ These clauses abound in a conventional and lifeless phraseology, but in no single instance is a definite forecast of any particular issue found. All that we have in this kind are the historical omens of Sargon and Naram-Sin, and a few others. These do contain details of names, actions, place, and time, but they are not omens, only records of omens, not professing to be prophecies even after the event but only guides to a possible future. Such in fact is the character of all the omens—'x has been observed, y ensues', a general rule of timeless⁴ application. Vagueness and ambiguity are the protective colours for oracles of every kind, but they have not always been enough, and have required to be eked out with deceit. There is remarkably little trace of this in the Babylonian system, perhaps because there is so much evidence of perfect belief in its efficacy. The Assyrian astrologers did indeed sometimes couple their observations with

¹ See note 3 on p. 56 below.

² A good account of the subjects covered by the apodoses of the omen-texts is given by L. Oppenheim in *Orientalia*, 1936, 199 ff., which reveals the deceptive appearance of detail which they offer.

³ The estimates of Oppenheim and of Boissier (most recently in his *Mantique hittite*, p. 7) tend to exaggerate the information we derive from this source.

⁴ As is well known, the omens use the 'past tense' in the protasis and the 'present' in the apodosis, illustrating by their countless examples how little implication of time there is in this distinction.

arguments rather ingenious than sincere to prove that signs of evil did not threaten their master but his enemies, and were therefore propitious.¹ Divination being a political instrument, abuse need not be doubted, but fraud² was at least not rampant.

In the extispicium something more could be done than in astrology. A sign in heaven manifestly occurred, could not be attributed to human agency, and at best could only be explained away. But examination of the entrails was undertaken purposely by man for man's occasions, to obtain the answer to definite questions. The sense of urgency thus engendered made the diviners particularly careful. Their profession was lucrative but could be dangerous,³ for, since we hear of no rash contemnors of heavenly warning like Hector, Tydeus, or certain great commanders of classical antiquity, an over-confident verdict was the more likely to have disastrous results. The Babylonian haruspices had therefore developed their technique to an unparalleled height. Their professional scripture was a great collection of details observed in the entrails, each accompanied by its interpretation. These were arranged in sections under a number of technical terms referring to the principal organs, and especially to the visible features of the liver. There was an examination when the entrails were still in the carcase and after the liver had been lifted out. But the question was far from being decided by any one of these omens or even by the whole group found in that victim. The first sacrifice was followed by another called a 'check',⁴ and if technical requirements were still not fulfilled there had to be a third. Finally, one or more *barû* summed up the results, and even at the end it was still uncertain whether a decision⁵ could be given. If forthcoming, this

¹ See above, p. 42, n. 2.

² A deliberate sophism, conspicuous by its rarity, is found in *CT.* xxxi. pl. 17, ll. 11-13, 'there will be *tašnintum* (rivalling) of the king', interpreted as (1) there will be a rival (*šarin*) of the king, or (2) the king will rival (*išannan*) everybody, a simple play upon the objective and subjective.

³ The *barû* is fairly often mentioned as deeply concerned in the success of the army which he accompanied; a true prediction won him 'an honoured name', the contrary 'a fall'. In *TU.* 2, obv. 24-6, his fortunes are ranked after those of the prince and of the army itself. A sumptuous reward was given by Cyrus the younger to the haruspex Silanos who had foretold that the King would not fight within 10 days (Xenophon, *Anab.* 1, 7, § 18). The sort of lore upon which this was founded is exemplified by the text in *CT.* xxxi. 16 and 18 (see *OLZ.* 1917, pp. 257 ff.).

⁴ *piqittu*.

⁵ Technical term *ME.A*. The best passage is *CT.* xx. 46, rev. 29, 30—

response was founded upon an elaborate combination. The minutiae observed in the victims were balanced against one another and evaluated according to a set of no less meticulous rules embodied in a long¹ and (apparently) a shorter² commentary, the first related to the understanding of omens in a single sacrifice, the second regulating a synthesis of results in the two (or three) oracles. Only at the end of this tedious pedantry could an answer emerge.

Such, in brief, was the system of imaginary science created by the Babylonians which, with astrology, was not only the most developed, but enjoyed the highest and longest repute among civilized mankind. Particular virtue was ascribed by the ancients to a practice which seems to us at once the most absurd and the most repellent of all the means of divination. There is little to indicate upon what supposition this belief rested.³ The clearest statement in Babylonian literature, once or twice found, is that the god 'wrote' his desire or decision upon the victim's entrails.⁴ In this a connexion was found between the god's handiwork upon earth and in heaven,⁵ for the stars were called 'the writing of the heavens' as though they had been letters (in this case, cuneiform signs) which spelled out the divine message.⁶ It might be expected that since both the stars and the livers spelled the inspired messages, there should have been traced many connexions between the two, and enough of this connexion can be seen to assure us that almost any sign in the one could have been discerned in the others by the misplaced ingenuity of the diviners. In several passages of the liver-omens signs in the

according to the result of the first and second (possibly add third) sacrifice, you may or may not give a final decision. Cf. *CT.* xx. 20, K. 6936, obv. 4; *CT.* xxx. 20, Rm. 570, rev. 3; *CT.* xxx. 41, 83-1-18, 416, obv. 8.

¹ Called *multabiltum*, in 17 tablets.

² Called *rikis girri*, in 3 (?) tablets. The statements here made upon the extent and character of this series would have to be substantiated elsewhere.

³ Greek ideas upon the reason for these signs being significant are explained by W. R. Halliday, *Greek Divination*, p. 199 f.

⁴ The passage generally quoted is *UMBS.* i. 1, no. 12, 14, the Sun-god himself 'writes the oracle in the body of the victim'. The same idea is expressed by Esarhaddon in recording the god's approval of his restoration of Babylon; Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, ii, § 645 and parallel passages. For Nabonidus also the Moon God 'wrote a favourable feature [literally, "flesh"] in my examination (of the victim)', A. T. Clay, *Miscellaneous Inscriptions*, no. 45, col. i, 16.

⁵ A like connexion was seen by the Etruscans: Pauly's *Realencyclopädie*, art. 'haruspices', col. 2454.

⁶ See Additional Note E (p. 93), 'The Writing of the Constellations'.

victim are said to portend an eclipse,¹ and in each case the part observed is damaged, impeded, or obscured, like the moon in eclipse. Reciprocally, the heavens influence the sacrifice; this should be accomplished under favourable aspects of the sun and moon,² inauspicious seasons being avoided.³ The effect of finding the gall-bladder perished was different in each month of the year,⁴ and in a commentary⁵ the 'weapon', which was a familiar mark upon the liver, is brought into relation with the sun and moon. A particular analogy is found in an incident which occurred upon a celebrated occasion. When Nabonidus was deliberating about the restoration of the moon-cult at Ur he received a celestial sign that the Moon-god desired a priestess, understood to be the god's concubine—'he showed his sign concerning desire for a "divine mistress"'. On the 13th of Elul, month of the mission of the goddesses, the "fruit" [i.e. the moon] was darkened and set in its darkened state. "The Moon-god desires a divine mistress", such was the sign and its meaning'.⁶ But there was also a liver-omen which attested the same wish of the god, 'if on the right of the gall there are two "desires" which are one over the other and black, the god desires a divine mistress'.⁷ This is differentiated from the preceding omen only

¹ *CT.* xx. 47, l. 57; xxx. 15, ll. 15 ff.; xxxi. 11, l. 11; *DA.* 9, l. 24; 13, l. 21; 96, l. 20; 226, l. 21; *KAR.* no. 153, obv. 3; no. 423, p. 385, l. 55. *TU.* no. 1, obv. 13 is especially significant—it refers to certain parts of the liver when two of them face downwards and 'are placed behind' the third.

² *KAR.* no. 151, rev. 52 ff.

³ *CT.* xxxi. 29, l. 15: on a day when the south-wind blows, do not fight a battle, do not cross a river if the liver shows a particular sign. But elsewhere the same king observes that the south wind was favourable for the assumption of royal power. It was a principle of the liver-divination that the interpretation of a sign depended on the purpose for which the consultation was being made. Hence the frequent heading of paragraphs 'if thou art making [it] for . . .' A list of some of the principal topics is given in *CT.* xx. 44, ll. 59–61.

⁴ *CT.* xxx. 12 (K. 1813, 13 ff.) and xxviii. 44 (K. 717).

⁵ B.M. 45634 in *CT.* xli. 42, obv. 10 f. This is a commentary upon Tablets V–VII of the sub-series *šumma ĦAR*, cf. *CT.* xx. 1, obv. 5–7.

⁶ A. T. Clay, *Miscellaneous Inscriptions*, no. 45; cf. recently F. M. Böhl in *Symbolae . . . P. Koschaker dedicatae*, pp. 162, 170. There is an Egyptian parallel in the bride of the god Amun, an institution known only in the late period; see J. Vandier, *La Religion égyptienne*, p. 151. They were sometimes kings' daughters, and adopted by their predecessors in the office. There seems to be no information how the god's choice was signified.

⁷ *TU.* 4, obv. 34. The 'desire' (*KAM-tum* i.e. *erīštum*) was a feature evidently so called because its appearance was held always to indicate that disposition of the god. The word translated 'one over the other' is *ritkubu*, which further illustrates the association of ideas.

by the addition that the marks are black—the darkened moon and the black spots in the liver had the same significance.¹ The haruspices whom Nabonidus consulted upon this occasion could have given him the same answer and with a like sign.

It has been observed in the first lecture that even gods were not held to be exempt from the necessity of publishing their beneficent acts, but they had only a lower audience. Kings might seem to bear a double duty—they must justify their stewardship both to their principals and their subjects. Yet in their performance of this there is a perceptible contrast between the two leading nations of the Ancient East. The records of the Egyptian kings seem to be placed, in general, so that they should be visible to, and in some measure comprehended by, the widest public. They are found upon stelae erected in the open, upon pylons, obelisks, sides of courtyards, and the outer walls of temples. Inner walls and columns are devoted to purely religious scenes illustrating the intimate relation of the king with the gods dwelling in the temple,² who grant him countless years of life, embrace him, aid him to draw the bow,³ and bless him for bestowing so magnificent an abode upon them. But everything about the more secular records seems to aim at information of the people. Not only are they sculptured in the most prominent positions, but inscriptions and pictures are often intermingled so that the most numerous class who could not read should yet be able to grasp the tenour of the narrative. In certain cases⁴ there is visible a geographical ordering of the material, still further to make intelligible the course of events to the uninstructed. Indeed, the whole decoration of Egyptian temples, reliefs, and inscriptions alike, really allot to the gods

¹ J. Nougayrol (in *RA.* xl, 72 f.) traces a similar augural connexion of 'shadows' upon the liver and over the moon.

² This difference was stated in a more absolute form in the lecture when delivered, but it is necessary to avoid exaggeration, for Mr. I. E. S. Edwards has pointed out several examples of celebrated historical inscriptions of the New Kingdom which are placed in parts of the temples more withdrawn than those likely to be frequented by the vulgar. But he also showed me an apt description of the older and more usual practice by L. Borchardt, *Die Pyramiden; ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung*, pp. 13-16, contrasting the reliefs in the hypostyle hall with those of the 'intimate temple' in the funerary building of Sahura.

³ Cf. Psalm xviii. 34, 'he teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of brass is broken by mine arms', and some words of Ashur-bani-pal, 'they (the gods) taught me to do battle and combat' (Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, ii. 362).

⁴ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, iii, § 80; A. H. Gardiner, *JEA.* vi. 99 ff.; H. H. Nelson, *Medinet Habu*, i. 8.

for whose benefit they were nominally built a decidedly minor part in comparison with the royal builders. Here is another manifestation of the tendency noticed already¹ for the present divinity, the king, to throw in the shade those nominally senior powers whose son and favourite he proclaimed himself.

A complete reversal of all this is found in Babylonia. So far from the royal records being placarded for the common gaze, it might be said that most of them were not addressed to mankind at all. It is necessary only to remember the origin of the Assyrian historical texts in their highest wrought form, on the polygonal prisms. As a literary development these grew out of the simple foundation inscriptions of the Sumerians, which, graven upon stone tablets, copper figures, clay cones, or bricks, and incorporated in buildings, did no more than record the name of the god, the builder, and the temple. This was expanded by two principal steps: (a) by the insertion of a note of time in the form 'when he (the ruler) had done so-and-so, he built etc.';² (b) by the gradual importation into this of more and more incidental matter until the introductory and building sections became quite subordinate to a detailed account, often annalistically arranged, of the king's campaigns and policy; there is reason to suppose that this transformation owed something to Hittite influence.³ But down to the end, culminating in the ten-sided Rassam prism of Ashur-bani-pal, these Assyrian histories were building-inscriptions, foundation-deposits, buried in or under walls, and not expected to be seen again by man until 'a later prince', coming to repair the structure, should peruse them and restore them to their place, as enjoined, with reverence and ceremony. In respect of publicity the case is no different with any of the other monuments upon which Assyrian⁴ historical writing is found. Pavement slabs⁵ and stelae⁶ were

¹ Lecture I, p. 3, and II, p. 44.

² For details and criticism of this see W. Baumgartner in *OLZ*. xxvii (1924), 313 ff.

³ A. Götze, *Kleinasien*, p. 163, and *Hethiter, Churriter, und Assyrier*, p. 73; also H. G. Güterbock, *ZA*. NF. x. 94 f.

⁴ In Babylonia *a fortiori*, for there historical writing was much less common, and the feature of publicity equally absent.

⁵ The great monolith inscription of Ashur-naṣir-pal formed the floor of Ninurta's shrine at Nimrūd. It was inscribed beneath as well as above, which astonished Layard (*Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 352), but would not trouble the god.

⁶ Some of these were, however, public monuments, namely those often recorded as set up by Assyrian conquerors in foreign cities as a sign of domination.

found in or before temples to which there was no open access; they were for the benefit of the god, not of men. Inscriptions sometimes accompanied the war-sculptures which lined the walls of rooms in the palaces. Picture and phrase were mutually illustrative, but it is certain that such rooms were not of public resort, often they were narrow and ill-lighted, and it cannot be assumed that the slabs were designed for the information even of those who had the entrée there. Many sculptures depict religious scenes, and some of these bear inscriptions, but the latter are not in any way descriptive of the rites shown being performed.¹ What is even more indicative is the fact that some slabs have inscriptions upon their backs which were, of course, embedded in the walls and quite invisible.²

But the most remarkable evidence of the Assyrian king's sentiment that it was to god that he owed primarily the account of his secular and warlike measures, is found in the curious custom of inditing a full report upon them in the form of letters to the divinity. There is a notable example in Sargon's detailed account of his 'eighth campaign', and other fragments are known. The address itself is interesting—to the god Ashur, to the gods and goddesses who dwell in his temple, to the other gods and goddesses who dwell in the city of Ashur, finally—the public is not quite forgotten—to the city and its people, be well! To the palace which is therein, be well! And all is very, very well with the writer and his camp.³ It has been noticed above⁴

¹ The 'Standard Inscription' of Ashur-naṣir-pal was repeated on every slab of several rooms in his palace sculptured with religious subjects. This condensed description of the king, his conquests and his building, probably has the purpose of associating him with every detail of the rituals performed, so as to enjoy every particle of magical advantage from them.

² Such were found occasionally in the palace of Ashur-naṣir-pal, but the best example is the inscription of Sargon (Botta, *Monument de Ninive*, iv. 164–79) from several different localities in the palace at Khorsabad. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, ii, § 103, reiterates the idea of Layard (p. 60, n. 4, above), but there is no hint of this in the inscription and the reason is imaginary; these words were not written for mortal eyes. Sennacherib thus addressed a stone tablet which was to be buried under the walls of a temple, 'O foundation, do thou speak to the god Ashur, etc.' (Luckenbill, op. cit. ii, §§ 441, 458). Compare Gudea, Statue B, vii. 24, 'may the statue to my King speak', praying for the maker whose very image it was to keep constantly before the god's face.

³ F. Thureau-Dangin, *Une relation de la huitième campagne de Sargon*. For the other examples see references in R. Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté*, p. 273, and S. Smith, *Schweich Lectures*, 1940, pp. 21, 111.

⁴ Lecture I, p. 27, n. 3.

that private people of quality also wrote letters occasionally to the god. Letters should be answered, and it would not be very surprising if the gods condescended to this decent attention. No example of a true letter from that side has yet been found,¹ but a very extraordinary document exists to prove that the divine chancellery was not above writing acknowledgements. An Assyrian king, probably Shamshi-Adad V, had sent to the god Ashur a detailed account of his campaigns, with full statistics of the places, prisoners, and booty captured. This report is not preserved, but its particulars are rehearsed in order by a partly preserved tablet² which bears an official approval and receipt issued by the god himself. In successive paragraphs the divine writer begins, 'As touching what thou hast written to me', and here inserts, in the king's own words, the account of a campaign in the usual style of the royal inscriptions, ending with detailed figures of the successes won. Then comes the phrase, 'It is by the command of my great godhead that it has so fallen out, to wit, thou hast, etc.', repeating the same details with only the change from the first person to the second. It would certainly be a mistake to regard this as a political manifesto, aimed at justifying the king's reign in the eyes of his subjects. The wars were the god's wars, the king his general, dispatches were sent to the 'government', and the official approval was given in writing to each and every episode of the general's conduct. As so often in the ways of this people's thinking, nothing could be more odd, nothing could be more natural.

¹ The nearest is perhaps a curative prescription vouchsafed by the god Adapa (*RA.* xxvi. 80, no. 110). Egyptian gods were much more free with their correspondence, for example, the deity who replied to a very ordinary petition 'by a letter', Czerný, *Bulletin de l'Institut français . . . du Caire*, xxxv. 42.

² Published by E. F. Weidner in *Afo.* ix. 102 f.

LECTURE III

THE PEOPLE

IN this third lecture we are to see divine and kingly rule in some of their effects, what they made of the world in which they worked, and what men thought they could do for themselves in conjunction with, or even in opposition to, the afore-said powers. With the people we are at last upon the human level, where indeed kings and even gods dwell too, save in estimation, but that makes all the difference. From the man's point of view the king stands for the remotely possible, the god for the merely conceivable. Yet these distinctions are vague and wavering, so that even extremes may meet. That gods are but too human is observable at a much higher level than the savage, being amply attested in ancient oriental, as well as classical literature. Conversely, there may be no particular difficulty about a man being a god, nor was this so only in the remote past. Sir James Frazer has a diverting page¹ which relates that 'a register of all the incarnate gods in the Chinese empire is kept in the *Li fan yüan* or Colonial Office at Peking. The number of gods who have thus taken out a licence is one hundred and sixty. . . . The Chinese government, with a paternal solicitude for the welfare of its subjects, forbids the gods on the register to be reborn anywhere but in Tibet. . . . But besides these public and licensed gods there are a great many little private gods or unlicensed practitioners of divinity, who work miracles and bless their people in holes and corners.' In contrast with this, after the heroic age among the nations of antiquity, attainment of divinity by men is rare. Most of the examples were found in Egypt; there was Imhotep, who became a god after spending his life as the minister of King Zoser; there were Kagemni, Isi,² and Amenophis the son of Hapu, vizirs of the Old and also the New Kingdoms; there were Enoch and Elijah in Israel, and the Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus was hailed as a god³ by the Delphic priestess. But in general, as there was no more going to and fro of gods on the earth (which became the sinister prow of demons⁴),

¹ *The Magic Art* (3rd ed.), i. 412 f.

² M. Alliot, in *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, xxxvii. 93 ff., 143 ff. In *JEOL*. no. 9, p. 34, is the abstract of an article by E. Otto, 'Gehalt und Bedeutung des ägyptischen Heroenglaubens' (*ZÄS.* lxxviii. 28 ff.).

³ Herodotus i. 65; Xenophon, *Apology*, § 15.

⁴ Job i, 7, but Satan there was still an agent rather than enemy of God: A. Lods, in *Mélanges syriens offerts à M. R. Dussaud*, II, 656, and J. Turmel, *Histoire du Diable*, pp. 11-14.

so there was no more of men mounting up into heaven. The sensation caused in Greek opinion¹ by the notions of Euhemerus is a measure of the rigidity of this ban.

Thus banished from hope of meeting his god upon earth or of raising himself to the god's throne, it was natural that men should contrive the closest contact they could imagine. The great gods were too remote,² the king perhaps a more present god,³ but yet a medium too little accessible to the private man. Domestic gods were likely to have more sympathy, and the worship of these spreads, of course, in various forms, far beyond the nations of the Ancient East. Many of the small figures of gods in various materials which survive in countless numbers from Egypt were found in the ruins of houses and had been household gods.⁴ In Babylonia it is possible to see the gods by successive steps coming home to the private man. Under the few gods who headed the pantheon and were in reputed control of the departments and powers of nature there were the city-gods, often identical with the great gods⁵ but doubtless more present to the devotion of the ordinary inhabitant as fellow citizens.⁶ The next grade down towards the human level is the 'parish' god who has been found at Ur,⁷ worshipped in chapels

¹ See Jacoby in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realencyclopädie*, vi, pt. 1, col. 966.

² Only great ones could get into the presence, where they left figures of themselves: this was done both in Egypt (see J. Capart in *Chronique d'Égypte*, nos. 39 and 40, pp. 64 ff.) and still more in Babylonia (as witness the hoard of statuettes at Tell Asmar, and the list given by E. D. van Buren in *Orientalia*, 1941, p. 70 f.). The remoteness of gods is remarked upon in an article summarized *AJA*. xlix. 84. One Egyptian device to mitigate this evil was to represent the god sitting outside his temple: A. Erman, *Religion*, p. 142 and pl. 5.

³ Bluntly expressed in the Greek flattery quoted by W. L. Knox, *Schweich Lectures*, 1942, p. 37, n. 2 (see Lecture I, p. 3).

⁴ Budge, *The Mummy* (2nd ed.), p. 355; Erman-Blackman, *Literature*, p. 306; J. Vandier, *La Religion égyptienne*, p. 208: a 'chapel' in a house at el-Amarnah, *MDOG*. no. 52, p. 26.

⁵ This 'amphibious' habitat of the gods is well displayed by two passages of Esarhaddon. When Sennacherib laid waste Babylon 'the gods who dwelt therein flew off like birds and went up to heaven', Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, ii, § 649. But on another occasion Ashur heard the king's prayer 'from the great gate of heaven', S. A. Strong, *BA*. ii. 629.

⁶ Cicero, *De Legibus*, ii. 11, gives the right sentiment of antiquity for a wrong reason, 'melius Graeci atque nostri, qui ut augerent pietatem in deos, easdem illos urbes quas nos incolere voluerunt'. Yet the divine vicinity might have its inconveniences, as revealed by the curious story about the tyrant Kleisthenes in Herodotus v. 67.

⁷ *Antiquaries Journal*, xi. 368 f. These dark and narrow ways had their

opening off the public streets, sometimes at cross-roads like the Roman *compita*, in the midst of a thickly populated quarter. These were presided over by figures of deities in stone, metal, and terra-cotta, the last being a degree above the humbler clay figurines which have been found so innumerably in excavations. Some of these may be ex-votos, more were apotropaic, to be affixed to walls, buried under thresholds, or to accompany the dead in their graves.¹ But so common among them are figures of gods that they can hardly be denied a role in domestic worship—it is a pity that the evidence for this is not more satisfactory.² Especially frequent are representations of the ‘naked goddess’, who was honoured alike in Egypt, Palestine,³ Syria, and Babylonia, and indeed much farther afield in place and time,⁴ as the patroness of family life. One characteristic type was the female with wide ears, pierced with holes for two or three rings. Even if this feature was treated sometimes as a mere facility for decoration,⁵ it may have been originally designed to show her receptivity to prayer, for in Egypt ears have been found carved upon stelae dedicated to the god Ptah,⁶ signifying his readiness to catch the supplications addressed to him. The celebrated story of Rachel’s theft of her father’s *teraphim* proves the existence of household gods as well as their portable size, knowledge recently acquired has added an understanding of the legal importance⁷ of these family possessions, and

dangerous spirits too, for in one place the demoness Lamashtu is called ‘sister of the street-gods’, *RA*. xviii, 198, 2. An Egyptian parallel is the local workmen’s cult at Der el-Medinah: B. Gunn, *JEA*. iii. 81 f.; J. Vandier, *La Religion égyptienne*, p. 220.

¹ As in the well-defined but uncertainly characterized Diqdiqqah at Ur (*Antiq. Journ.* v. 18 ff.). Ex-votos are most indubitably exemplified by the figurines with inscribed dedications to the goddess Gula, published in *Sumer*, iii, 1, pp. 20 f.

² ‘Chapels’ of houses at Ur (*Antiq. Journ.* vii. 399 f.), but no figurines in them. See also H. Frankfort, *The Gimil-Sin Temple . . . at Tell Asmar*, p. 210, and E. D. Van Buren, *Clay Figurines*, nos. 1206 and 1209. See also Taha Baqir in *Sumer*, ii, 2, p. 24 and illustration opp. p. 30.

³ W. F. Albright in *Mélanges Dussaud*, i. 108; E. Pilz, *ZDPV*. xlvii. 165 ff.; J. B. Pritchard, *Palestine Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses*, pp. 5–31.

⁴ D. H. Gordon, ‘Early Indian Terracottas’, in *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, xi. 136 ff.

⁵ For a modern example see the picture of an African girl in *Illustr. Lond. News*, 1927, p. 951, fig. 2.

⁶ Petrie, *Memphis*, i. pls. 8–13 and p. 7, and cf. S. A. Cook, *Schweich Lectures*, 1925, p. 142.

⁷ S. Smith, *Journ. Theol. Studies*, xxxiii. 33 and C. H. Gordon, *Revue biblique*, xlv. 35.

it may be possible to discern the use of these little gods in divination.¹

The god having been brought first out of his temple, then into the parish, then into the house, it remained to identify him with the individual, and in Babylonia at least everyone had a god and goddess of his own. These were the figures so common on the cylinder-seals, standing beside, or leading up, the owner of the seal, as he approaches to worship the greater god who commands his allegiance, the 'introduction' scene which so naïvely expresses the hope² that the wearer's god will continually keep his protégé's image fresh in the mind of that power. But the possession of one's own god and goddess, though comforting, was risky—so intimate a connexion made these companions very susceptible of offence by untoward conduct of their charge, what he ate and drank, or where he walked. If disgusted with any carelessness of this kind they would abandon him in misery. The language of the prayers³ and of the omens abounds with doleful references to incurring the wrath of one's own god, and with aspirations to recovering his favour, so as again to 'possess a god', or specifically a *šedu* and *lamassu*.⁴ Rather inconsistently, when a man was convinced by affliction that his own god and goddess had turned against him, he would then appeal to the greater god, such as Marduk, to reconcile him with the minor deities whom he had estranged. This was to reverse, as it were, the positions of the gods upon the cylinder-seals; but even a modern proverb illustrates perplexity by 'ne pas savoir à quel saint se vouer'.

A future life of bliss in a better world being a notion as yet unborn, man's mind saw the goodness of the divine rule under which he lived when it resulted in mundane prosperity and happiness. This was true even of the Osirian religion in Egypt, for the life after death, though in a different place, was looked forward to merely as a continuation of advantages enjoyed in the present.⁵ When prosperity was bestowed publicly it was generally proclaimed as the reward to a king for a reign considered (naturally, by that king himself) as exceptionally pleasing to the gods, and thus might accrue to the individual without

¹ See Additional Note F (p. 95), 'Figures of Gods in Divination'.

² More exactly, the seal was an amulet to ensure this effect.

³ A variety of passages is cited by C. J. Mullo-Weir, *A Lexicon of Accadian Prayers*, p. 126 f.

⁴ *CT.* xx. 50, rev. 21; xxx. 22, col. ii. 4, &c.

⁵ A. H. Gardiner in *JEA.* iv. 205 and *The Attitude of the Ancient Egyptians to Death and the Dead*, esp. pp. 13, 25, 29.

special merit of his own. There are several examples, spread through Babylonian history, of tariffs of prices¹ current for the staple commodities of agriculture and commerce; Ashur-banipal has even related that in his glorious days the barley grew to a length of five ell in the straw and five-sixths in the ear.² The prices in these tariffs,³ the earliest of which appears in an inscription of Samsi-Adad I (18th century B.C.), do not in general attain this height of exaggeration. They are low, to give a favourable impression of abundance, but not (with one exception⁴) incredibly low. To make any such claim would contradict the purpose of the inscriptions, which is to indicate a high level of prosperity, and this would not reign in the presence of ruinous cheapness, for the mercantile class was numerous and influential, and to these men there was no question of higher importance than the price-level. This emphasis is found particularly in the consequences inferred from omens, often interpreted as forecasting 'profit' or 'loss', and referring continually to the state of prices. These mundane matters obtrude themselves even into the *extispicium*;⁵ they are more often affected by the heavenly bodies and (naturally) by the weather, which forms one section of the astrological omens. They were a frequent concern of those who watched for signs in the incidents which surrounded them every day, and received some notice in other collections of forecasts. In most of these occurrences a fall⁶ in the level of prices is associated with evil omens or undesired

¹ Another of these has lately been published in an inscription of Addaḥušu (or Addapakšu), a king of Elam in the Old Babylonian period (*Délégation en Perse*, xxviii. 3—not yet available to the writer).

² Approximately 7 ft. 6 in. and 1 ft. 4 in. The passage is in his *Annals*, col. i. 46 f. Compare Budge, *Book of the Dead*, ch. 109, 'the barley therein is seven cubits', &c.

³ They have been studied by B. Meissner, *Warenpreise in Babylonien* (Abhandl. d. preuss. Akad. d. Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, 1936, no. 1).

⁴ Sin-gashid, an obscure ruler of Erech, whose values are not a tariff but a prayer for phenomenal abundance; Thureau-Dangin, *Sumer. und Akkad. Königsinschriften*, p. 222. Similar fantastic prices are imagined in the omens, e.g. Virolleaud, *Astrologie chaldéenne*, Ištar, xvii. 12 ff., 2nd Supp. lxxiii. 47, and R. C. Thompson, *Reports of the Astrologers*, no. 185, 11. The rates quoted in Samsi-Adad's list (*KAHI*. Heft 1, no. 2, col. iii. 13 ff.) also seem to be artificial.

⁵ e.g. *CT*. xxxi. 37, rev. 8, 'the man will see loss'; *KAR*. p. 406, ll. 53, 54, and p. 400, ll. 7, 8.

⁶ e.g. Virolleaud, *Astr. chald.*, Šamaš, x. 5; Dennefeld, *Geburts-Omina*, p. 73, l. 11. A glut of produce, desirable in itself, entailed a fall in prices, e.g. *Astr. chald.*, Adad, xxxi. 34, 35 and A. T. Clay, *Morgan iv*, no. 13, ll. 58, 59—'if A., the land will eat a fat price; if B. the land will bear a [heavy] crop'.

accompaniments, and vice versa,¹ while a 'steady' price² is always to be commended. The same point of view is held by a list of phrases drawn up for use in mercantile affairs,³ for this shows clearly where its approval lies by contrasting such expressions as a 'small' or 'weak' price against the obviously more relished 'good', 'strong', or 'fine price'.

The ancient literatures have something to say about the social conditions of the people, being given to picturing in rather stereotyped detail the conditions of life in times regarded as good or bad. There is, here also, some difference between Egypt and Babylon; in the latter the contrast of rich and poor is duly noticed, but there are no Ascræan squalors of the peasants' life, such as are enlarged upon by the Egyptian commendations of the clerkly profession. It has been observed (in the second lecture, pp. 43 f.) that a fairly active social conscience is seen at work, perhaps especially in Babylonia, but the descriptions of good and evil days are certainly not all dictated by such conscience, for they have the form of historical narratives, with some moral cast—a variety of motives lies behind them, and it is doubtless impossible to ascribe them all to one impulse. But out of these a theory was constructed which held the views of all such writers to be dominated by a belief in ages of the world, an age of doom being followed by one of blessing,⁴ introduced by a divine or royal saviour. Thus it was sought to evince that eschatological ideas⁵ were current in the Ancient East generally,

¹ e.g. Dennefeld, *op. cit.*, p. 73, l. 12; *KAR.*, p. 400, l. 8 (the king's land which saw famine will [now] see a fat price in it); *Astr. chald.*, Sin, xxxiii. 71 (the low price will be inflated, on account of civil strife).

² e.g. *Astr. chald.*, Šamaš, x. 88; *KAR.*, p. 329, l. 34 (black ants killing brown); cf. *ibid.*, p. 326, l. 35 (a good sign).

³ *Syria*, xii. 239 (2nd tablet of *ḥar-ra: ḥubullu*); B. Landsberger, *ana ittišu*, ii, col. 3, 17 ff.

⁴ It may be allowed that they thought of history as vicissitude, which merely corresponds with human experience. But they seem to have been almost exempt from the persistent illusion of the 'good old days', and the pessimism which asks—

Must not the world wend in his commun course,
From good to badd, and from badde to worse?

The Sumerian story of Enki and Ninhursag (S. N. Kramer, *BASOR. Supp. Studies*, no. 1, 1945) does not, in its opening lines, describe a primeval paradise; like other stories, it is concerned with the coming into use of resources needed for the fulfilment of human life. Dilmun had many blessings, but it still lacked certain necessities.

⁵ See S. Smith, *Schweich Lectures*, 1940, pp. 18, 104, 106, who protests that it is an abuse to apply the term 'eschatology' to ideas of simple change.

and not only in Israel, where such writers maintain that they prevailed much earlier than is generally believed. The passages relied upon occur both in Egyptian and Babylonian literature; they include the prophecy of Dedi before Cheops, announcing a change of dynasty, the admonitions of the sage Ipuwer, the prophecy of Nefer-rehu, and a variety of allusions in the Babylonian legends, omens, and prayers.¹ It is true that such systematizing of what purports to be historical narrative into myth and faith now wears a somewhat old-fashioned air, but its influence is still felt in the necessity which some feel to transpose into legend² what they do not think themselves otherwise enough informed about to take for fact. Without attempting a general re-discussion of all this, we confine ourself here to a more recently published Assyrian fragment³ which has been drawn into this argument as a conspicuous example of prophecy concerning reigns blessed and accursed. This text, in paragraphs of unequal length, relates the careers of successive anonymous kings, all beginning 'rise of a prince, for n years he exercises the kingship'. They go on to describe either the prosperity of the land, with plenty of corn and cattle, ample rains, and public happiness, or on the contrary foreign invasions, dearth, and revolution. But despite the conventional tone there are enough details to prove that it is no mere imagining. 'The land' is specified as Akkad, the foreign invader is Elam, another alien power is Amurru, and there is an allusion to a battle at Tupliash—in short, the familiar setting of Babylonian history. Still more remarkable, the lengths of reigns are accurately specified, though the names of the rulers are not given. The longest connected passage describes reigns of 18, 13, (a few), and 3 years successively; in another part of the tablet a reign of 8 years follows one of 3. If such statements were prophecies, then the only form of prophecy capable of such audacity in detail is the *post eventum*, and this necessitates that real events corresponding had actually happened. It may be pointed out, briefly,⁴ that there

¹ Most of these can be found translated in Erman-Blackman, *Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, pp. 43, 94, 112, and Ebeling in *AOTAT.*, pp. 46 ff.

² In a recent study of the 'historical tradition', by H. G. Güterbock in *ZA.* NF. viii. 13 ff. and x. 45 ff., 'Segenszeiten' and 'Fluchkönige' are still to be discerned.

³ *KAR.*, no. 421, translated by Ebeling in *AOTAT.*, p. 283 f. For earlier discussions of this see the references in R. Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté*, p. 297, n. 101. His own suggestion that it is an omen-text is unacceptable, for it has not one of the necessary characteristics of that form.

⁴ Since these lectures were delivered it has been revealed that the above

is a period of history which corresponds with this outline rather closely—the last four kings of the Kassite dynasty, Meli-Shipak II (15 years), Merodach-baladan I (13 years), Zababa-shum-iddin (1 year), and Enlil-nadin-ahi (3 years). Historically, very little is known about the events which marked the first two reigns, but the two succeeding were times of invasion and defeat at the hands of both Assyrians and Elamites, the latter finally putting an end to the Kassite dynasty. The second group of 3 and 8 years, the first evil, the second prosperous, occurs on the other face of the tablet, and there is no knowing whether it preceded or followed the other. Probably it followed (i.e. was written on the reverse), for the only historical group which resembles it is Mushezib-Marduk (4 years) followed by Sennacherib's rule of 8 years in Babylon. The contrast in conditions under the two might show that the tablet was Assyrian by inspiration as well as by origin. But less confidence can be felt in this than in the first group.

This anonymous but more or less transparent allusion to history is not unique; there are other texts of a similar kind. One, also Assyrian, has been long known and considered as a code of moral precepts for the warning of a king tempted to wrongdoing. But a recent writer¹ has convincingly argued that this also is an oblique reference to a known historical occasion, conferring obloquy upon one king (Merodach-baladan II) for alleged oppression of Sippar, Nippur, and Babylon, and, by implication, giving glory to his conqueror, Sargon II of Assyria, who reversed his unjust policy. Still more resemblance is found in a fragment² describing a condition of social upheaval when the prince was afflicted with war and disease, and distress had loosed all natural ties between human beings. Yet another complaint³ begins with phrases indicative of distress and oppression in the land; the tyrant's son, succeeding him, is murdered in the palace with his counsellors during

explanation has been given independently, in two different forms, by Weidner and Böhl during the late war. Böhl's article appeared in *JEOL.*, no. 7, p. 416, and he returned to the subject in the *Addenda* to nos. 6–8, p. 766. Weidner's solution is known to me only by Böhl's summary in the second of these places. It will be seen that I find myself in agreement with Weidner as against Böhl.

¹ F. M. Th. Böhl, 'Der babylonische Fürstenspiegel' (*MAOG.* xi, Heft 3), p. 30.

² K. 4541, last translated by Ebeling in *AOTAT.*, p. 230. Both this and the preceding have been repeatedly cited in support of the idea of eschatological legend.

³ K. 7861, published in *CT.* xiii. 50.

an insurrection which leads to combats between city and city, house and house, brother and brother, and even to plundering of the shrines. At length the gods repent and restore the authority to a royal son unknown before, who builds up again the temples of the gods. But plague bursts upon his land once more, and after seven years the new king falls into ruin with all his family, and a fresh anarchy of rival claimants begins. If we are justified in viewing these tales of woe as authentic history, generalized and refurbished for the times, we may allow that these older documents bear some seeds of the later apocalyptic literature, and could be compared with the vision of the four empires in the Book of Daniel (assuming the usual opinion of its date), or, better, with the 'Sibylline Oracles' of the late Hellenistic Age. In these also, past events were related in the future tense, and the course of familiar, even contemporary, history was minutely followed in the singular guise of being foretold concerning the time to come.¹ The 'Sibylline Oracles' were composed with the aim of propagating Judaism and Christianity; possibly those Assyrian generalized histories had a didactic purpose, but it would not be easy to guess what part they filled in the ideas or education of their period.

Whatever of worldly prosperity the gods might vouchsafe, it was the common persuasion of mankind that welfare was to be earned, if at all, only by piety, that is, by ritual correctitude, not by moral excellence. For the community an important means to attaining this condition was afforded by the public festivals, but it is never very clear what part the people took in these, nor how the individual could have supposed he profited from them. The general participation in the Jewish festivals is carefully prescribed in the laws of Israel, the people's share in Egyptian holy days is attested both in Pharaonic times² and by the livelier accounts of Herodotus. In the Babylonian New-Year festival the people were present at the less esoteric rites

¹ They record 'historische Begebenheiten älterer Zeit oder jüngster Vergangenheit als zukünftige Ereignisse, also, statt im Präteritum — im Futurum . . . sich die verkündeten geschichtlichen Ereignisse gewöhnlich bis zur der Lebenszeit des betreffenden Verfassers zu erstrecken pflegen' (A. Rzach in Pauly-Wissowa's *Encyclopädie*, Zweite Reihe, Band ii, Sp. 2118). See also W. Weber, *Der Prophet und sein Gott*, p. 58 f., and, for a recent study in their application to history, M. I. Rostovtzeff in *Berytus*, viii. 34 ff.—they furnish 'in part the most detailed report of the events under review', i.e. the operations of Sapor I against Syria.

² A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, pp. 179, 183, A. M. Blackman in S. H. Hooke, *Myth and Ritual*, pp. 22-4, 34.

and took an undefined part¹ in these, the best known of which is the otherwise obscure custom of appointing and deposing a mock-king under the name of 'Zoganes', which is said to have been done at a 'Persian' festival in Babylon called the Sakaia, represented as essentially a time of popular licence.² Apart from the holiday, what did the people suppose they derived from any of these occasions? It can have been no more than the satisfaction of playing their part in a ceremony indispensable to the well-being of their cities and their own lives. The 'Babylonian Job' declared that 'the day of worshipping the gods was my heart's delight, the day of the goddess's procession was gain and wealth to me'—he had done his part and might expect divine favour as his reward (though he was disappointed). Not even in the observance of the Jewish festivals³ was anything but a ritual effect expected.

The individual finding himself in distress concluded that he had incurred the wrath of the gods by some formal incorrectness of behaviour. But it was not necessary to wait for disaster to occur, because the gods vouchsafed warnings and allowed themselves to be questioned, condescending to reply by the same means.⁴ The private man was by no means unconcerned in the use of oracles, especially in Egypt, where questions were addressed to gods even upon personal occasions of trifling import.⁵ The divinatory practices of early Israel, freely denounced by the prophets, were mainly those of private men, even if Saul was the most prominent offender in resorting to the baleful expedient of necromancy. It is perhaps to be assumed that in Babylonia, too, ordinary persons addressed questions to gods and were given answers purporting to be directly inspired, but little is heard of this;⁶ to judge by the literature, the divinities were above having much to say to the lower orders. What these depended upon mainly were dreams and chance signs. As with kings, so individuals no doubt

¹ S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian akitu Festival*, pp. 151, 218, 222, and W. F. Leemans in *Symbolae Van Oven* (Leiden, 1946), p. 56.

² See Additional Note G (p. 95), 'Zoganes' and the 'Sakaia'.

³ S. H. Hooke, *Schweich Lectures*, 1935, 46 ff.

⁴ An instructive passage on Greek orthodoxy in the use of oracles and divination occurs at the beginning of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, bk. i, ch. i, §§ 2-9, and ch. iv, § 11.

⁵ Lecture I, pp. 23 f.

⁶ The clearest example, where a god replies vocally 'yes' or 'no', is contained in the collection of terrestrial omens—the answer is inferred from the circumstances rather than from the words themselves: *CT.* xxxix. 41; F. Nötscher, *Orientalia*, nos. 51-4, p. 218; B. Landsberger, *MAOG.* iv. 318.

resorted to purposive dreaming in temples, or caused professionals to do this on their behalf. But it is the other kind of dream, which comes unbidden but yet has a meaning, that we meet for the first time in the writings of the ancient east.

The earliest 'dream-book', of the kind which has scarcely failed in any age down to our own, has been found in Egypt,¹ and belongs to the Middle Kingdom period. It is also known that there was in Egypt a kind of academy, called the 'House of Life',² which had, among others, the important function of interpreting dreams. Particularly, no doubt, these were royal dreams, though it is a singular fact that no recorded dream of the Pharaohs is of the kind which requires explanation. But the story of Joseph supplies typical if not direct evidence, and the wise men over whom he prevailed in skill of interpretation might be regarded as the professors of the 'House of Life'. The existence of this institution, the early date of the dream papyrus, and the revelation that literature of this kind was still being produced in the last age of Egyptian writing³ has given ground for a claim that dream-books were first compiled in Egypt. It has been justly observed that no nation need be over-anxious to claim so dubious a distinction. But if the invention is to be disputed between Egypt and Babylonia, both could put in a respectable claim. In favour of the first there is the 'House of Life' and, still more, the undisputed possession of the oldest document. This has, in addition to its age, two peculiarities which seem to stamp its independence—one, of slight importance, is the prefixing of 'good' or 'bad' to the interpretation of each dream, the other distinctively Egyptian, the division of dreamers into 'followers of Horus' and 'followers of Seth'. On the other hand, this papyrus also has features which seem to be non-Egyptian, and suggest influence from the land where divination of all kinds was at home. First there is the omen-form, unmistakable in Babylonia, but unparalleled in Egypt. Next, the frequent mention of 'his god' does not suggest Egyptian ideas, but is a characteristic feature of Babylonian religion. The same might be said about the addition to the

¹ A. H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 3rd Series, i. 9 ff.

² B. Gunn in *JEA*. iv. 252; A. H. Gardiner, *ibid.* xxiv. 157 ff.

³ A recent Danish publication by A. Volten, *Demotische Traumdeutung* (Analecta Aegyptiaca, vol. viii, Copenhagen, 1942), is the subject of an interesting description by J. Capart in *Chronique d'Égypte*, no. 36 (July 1943), pp. 259 ff., with two additional notes by B. van de Walle. It appears that Volten has made a confident claim, endorsed by Capart, for the Egyptian invention of the 'science' of dream interpretation.

dreams of an incantation and a ritual of sympathetic magic¹ to do away the evil implications of a vision. These are the usual appendages of an Assyrian omen-text, but they look out of place in an Egyptian work. It is, in addition, only to be expected that dream-omens in Babylonia will by some future find be attested in the First Dynasty period, where the other kinds have already been established, and this would almost close the existing gap in time. The 'priority-question' had therefore better be left open for the present.

Such parts of the Assyrian dream-book as are at present known² show little more than the characteristic vanities of such compilations everywhere. The dreams are inconsequential, though there is more attempt to group similar subjects than in the Egyptian book. These subjects are trivial, sometimes alarming, occasionally ludicrous, and their supposed significances of a very commonplace kind. These things were taken seriously enough. An Assyrian king confesses himself appalled³ by a bad 'dream and vision' which occurred among the other 'signs and omens, evil and not good, which are in my palace and in my land'. Alike by kings and commoners, incantation and ritual were applied⁴ to forestall the fulfilment of a dire vision, as they were also employed by the fearful to ensure that their dreams would be good.⁵ Only one other remark need be made about the Assyrian dream-book—its information was guaranteed by a slight introductory myth, of which a fragment⁶ remains. This seems to have related that the god Ziquiqu was the first to interpret dreams, and that he lived in the city of Agade. Little as this amounts to, it is of some interest as describing a god who lived in a human city and invented an art⁷ at a time after the ordinary age of legend.

The manner in which warnings or encouragements were

¹ The dreamer's face is to be rubbed with moist bread and herbs, to cleanse away the foul vision.

² A. Boissier, *Choix de Textes relatifs à la Divination*, ii. 1-46.

³ L. W. King, *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery*, no. 4, l. 38.

⁴ As also in the Egyptian papyrus (above, p. 73).

⁵ H. F. Lutz in *AJSL*. xxxv (1919), pp. 145-7; Kunstmann, *Die babylonische Gebetsbeschwörung*, p. 70. Some Egyptian texts of a similar kind (dreams obtained by calling up the dead) are mentioned by G. Contenau, *La Divination chez les Babyloniens*, p. 138. Juvenal scoffs (vi. 546 f.) at the Roman Jews who would sell you any dream you liked for a copper.

⁶ K. 3758, unpublished.

⁷ It would be unjustified to consider this as evidence for the age of dream-interpretation in Babylonia.

most often conveyed to common men was by everyday occurrences which had something noticeable about them, or at any rate were noticed, for very trifling circumstances may at a given moment be as striking as great events.¹ This aptitude for picking out some fragment from the unending stream of experience and attaching a fancied importance to it is a mark of the popular, indeed the vulgar, outlook. Such a character as Sancho Panza is typical—full of alarms started by every absurd circumstance and of equally trivial proverbs for a consolation. When such wiseacre lore is upon every lip it is not very likely to be much collected and written down, but lives its life in old wives' tales.² This is probably the reason why, in most of the ancient oriental lands, little of this popular divination is recorded. There is nothing of it in Egypt, not much in the Old Testament,³ nothing in the texts from Ugarit,⁴ but the Hittites, faithful again to their taste for omens of every kind, were great watchers of birds. In Assyria, however, this kind of lore was conscientiously collected and arranged, and its study, if not accounted so noble as that of the entrails or the heavens, was held worthy to admit these books to the royal library. This was because the scribes had erected a popular superstition into a science. First they filled out artificially a single observation to a 'scientific' whole, and constructed thereby an exhaustive list embracing all their knowledge of the subject in question. Next, in writing down the omens they indulged in a wealth of learned language and obscure expressions which then had to be elucidated by commentaries. Finally, they did not register the signs of doom without providing means to avert it, for a regular appendage to the tablets of terrestrial omens is an incantation and ritual,⁵ designed to set right by a timely intervention that defect in

¹ See the observations of W. R. Halliday, *Greek Divination*, p. 169.

² See Additional Note H (p. 96), 'Survivals of Some Babylonian Omens'.

³ Omens in the Old Testament, from whatever derived, seem to be always what the Romans called *impetrativa*, a reply being sought through a defined medium to a special question in the seeker's mind.

⁴ The examination of eagles in the story of Dan-el is not now understood as divinatory; see Additional Note D, p. 92.

⁵ As in the Egyptian dream-papyrus (see above, p. 73). In Babylonia this appendage is peculiar to the terrestrial omens, being by its nature appropriate only to *oblative*. The extispicium was designed to obtain answers—it did not foreshadow arbitrary consequences which might have to be averted. That expiatory rites were performed in consequence of astrological menaces is amply witnessed by the Assyrian letters and reports, but the incantations and rituals were not written on the tablets of the omens.

the due balance of affairs which an evil omen has revealed as impending. Elsewhere the calling of a diviner might be less specialized. His talent was in demand everywhere, and might be procured by fortunate chance; nobody, said Eumaeus the swineherd,¹ would bring in a beggar, but any craftsman, such as a diviner, a leech, a carpenter, or a minstrel, is welcome all the world over. It was a trade like the others, but they all had something divine about them.

Though the contents of the Assyrian collection of terrestrial omens, called 'if a city is set upon a hill', are miscellaneous, the greater part of the omens is furnished by animals and birds. This interest in animal behaviour is shared by primitive races and children. Animals are believed to be especially sensitive to the minds of the gods, and this is why the liver, as the supposed centre of life, was thought so supremely indicative. Whether the animals themselves were supposed to know what they were doing is left uncertain,² and evidently did not much matter to the interpreter. Nearly always the creatures gave signs by their ordinary behaviour; even the extraordinary, as monstrous births, which were studied separately, had the same character of unsought manifestations. It is impossible to define how purposefully their behaviour was thought to be conditioned by the presence of one hoping for a sign,³ for it depends upon the infinitely variable receptivity of the beholder. An omen presented spontaneously by an external being, what the Romans called 'oblativ', may become 'impetrativ' when the witness is bent upon finding his answer in the things around him. The

¹ *Odyssey*, xvii. 382-6.

² Balaam's ass and Achilles' horse and (as a correspondent has reminded me) the two cows of Bata in the Egyptian 'Tale of the Two Brothers' knew what they were divinely enabled to express. Various opinions might be gathered from classical antiquity—the prettiest is in Vergil, *Georg.* i. 145 f., who says that birds foretelling fine weather know not what they do. Yet Dido appealed to the stars as *conscia fati* (*Aen.* iv. 519). Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, i, ch. 1. 3 says the general opinion was that the birds do not know: but according to Tacitus (*Germ.*, ch. 10) the Germans consulted horses, *se enim ministros deorum, illos conscios putant*. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites* (1914 ed.), p. 443, was of opinion that 'omens are not blind tokens; the animals know what they tell to men'. In the *Mélanges Franz Cumont*, i. 29 ff J. Bayet examines the belief in 'présages figuratifs déterminants', according to which the creatures, especially birds, are not merely announcers but actually the bringers and doers of the things which they 'portend'.

³ The Romans distinguished between *augurium* which was purposefully sought in the behaviour of certain birds only, and *auspicium* which was neither: Servius on *Aen.* i. 398.

Philistines were enjoined by diviners to draw a conclusion from the route taken by two cows drawing a cart upon which the Ark was carried (1 Sam. vi.); yet their action was in no way abnormal. Birds were most often watched deliberately because, from their aery nature, they were held to be specially ominous, and the nobler birds, the eagle, falcon, and raven, had a pre-eminent significance for Assyrian, as they had for Greek, armies. In these omen-tablets the seers, who marched before the host,¹ interpreted the movements, actions, combats, cries, and appearance of these birds as foretelling the issue of the expedition. Often these prophecies were dire, and it was even foretold² that 'my army will not return from the march on which it is going'. There are two passages which show an even more deliberate watching for birds to give omens. One is at the end of the 66th Tablet of *šumma alu*—a direction is given to ensure 'that so-and-so, son of so-and-so, may attain his desire: let a cock or a . . . or a "wide-wing" run up and [pass?] to the left of me'. How to cause this; a measure of barley is to be ground and parched on a brick over a fire of thorns. Take this, go out into the plain, stand facing the sun, recite the incantation thrice, 'a bird will come and thou shalt look at him'—the bait might succeed even without the incantation. Elsewhere³ occurs the phrase 'if a man is sent up (?) as a watcher to the palace', and there follow divers observations of a bird moving in either direction, picking up something, uttering cries, or fighting. The consequences all concern the man himself, not the inhabitant of the palace, and perhaps it is not meant that the man was posted on the roof as an *auspex*.⁴ Finally, the extreme of sensitiveness to omens which present themselves in mundane things is exhibited by the behaviour of two professional brethren

¹ In the omens *TU*. no. 2, obv. 21, 24 the *barû* comes after none but the *rubû* and *ummanu*, in *KAR.*, p. 407, ll. 3, 4, the *barû* appears as a warrior. Other examples are quoted by J. Nougayrol in *RA*. xl. 87 and a much older instance from actual life occurs in the Mari letter translated by C. F. Jean in *RA*. xxxix. 63, 'à la tête . . . marche . . . le devin'.

² e.g. in *CT*. xxxix, pl. 24, catch-line of the 66th Tablet. An omen in the Old Babylonian classical speech (*CT*. xli, pl. 14, catch-line) forebodes the 'fall of my army' from the flight of 'many eagles over my army on the march'.

³ *CT*. xl, pl. 49, ll. 1-26; cf. pl. 48, ll. 26-8. The Assyrian letter, Harper, *ABL*. 1278, seems to treat of watching birds, perhaps from the roof of a temple; see the translations by L. Waterman, *Royal Correspondence*, Part II, and by R. H. Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, no. 339.

⁴ The *auspex* (*LÜ.IGI.HU*) is expressly mentioned in some Hittite divination-texts, e.g. Bozkurt-Çiğ-Güterbock, *Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde . . . Boğazköy Tabletler*, &c., no. 32, ll. 4, 23.

who are found at the beginning of a long medical treatise¹ setting out for the house of a sick patient. These are the *barû* and the *asîpu*, one to notice all the signs which portend the sufferer's death or recovery, the other to recite efficacious incantations for him. As soon as they emerge into the street signs are everywhere. A brick lying in the road, passing dogs, pigs, oxen, asses, sheep, their colours, how they carry their tails, what day of the month it is, what sorts of citizens meet them, buzzing in the ears, twitching of the eyes, all of these have their boding for the sick man they are going to attend.

One more special case of purposeful attention to ordinary things deserves a brief notice here. It is singular that no palpable reference occurs in Babylonian divination to the widespread practice of 'scrying' or clairvoyance, looking at a bright, smooth surface (oil, eggs, ink, the polished nail, mirrors) to see visions indicative of the future.² But an inscription upon a clay model of the sheep's liver, found at Mari,³ reads 'in his dream I saw a governor (*šakkanakkum*)', which is suggestive of the 'princes' who, under various styles, are the foremost actors in the visions described by gazers of this kind: if clairvoyance in the surface of the liver is meant, it recalls also the familiar description of the liver by Plato⁴ as a mirror reflecting the thought of the gods. Another passage⁵ may point to a like custom—'if in a waste place, where the river does not keep water, a water-hole opens of itself, and the people see⁶ a city which mankind has not built, etc.'. The next line is even more suggestive, 'if ditto [i.e. a water-hole opens] and a seer sees⁷ a city, garden, and people'. It goes on to name physical impurities which may be seen in the water, and thus reverts to the ordinary style of the omen-texts, but the faery city, its setting, and its inhabitants must belong to the world of visions.

¹ That of the diagnostic omens, called, from its beginning, 'when to a sick man's house (the enchanter goes)'. The text here described is known from an article by F. W. Geers in *AJSL*. xliii. 22–41; cf. R. Labat in *RA*. xl. 35, 38.

² Without attempting any comprehensive reference, it will suffice to name E. W. Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, ch. xii; A. W. Kinglake, *Eothen*, ch. xviii; R. C. Thompson, *PSBA*. 1906, p. 85; S. Daiches, *Bab. Oil Magic in the Talmud and in the later Jewish Literature*; D. B. Macdonald, *Religious Attitude and Life in Islam*, pp. 96 ff.; W. H. Worrell in *JAOS*. xxxvi. 42 ff.

³ M. Rutten in *RA*. xxxv. 48, no. 26: the third person, 'in his dream', may be an error. J. Nougayrol, *École pratique des Hautes-Études, Annuaire 1944–5*, p. 31, n. 118, regards this 'omen' from Mari as pertaining simply to a dream of the haruspex.

⁴ *Timaeus*, § 71, C.

⁵ *CT*. xxxix, pl. 22, l. 8.

⁶ Or 'a city . . . and people are seen'.

⁷ Or simply 'one can see'; the *amiru* is not necessarily a purposeful viewer.

There could be little doubt of the antiquity of this divination,¹ and such indications of it in the 'official' literature perhaps have a further interest as illustrating the kind of subconscious visual experiences which have been traced² in certain visions recounted by the prophets of Israel.

The form of Babylonian omens is simple and rigid—'if x has been, y will be'. This form is not confined to the omen-literature, but is characteristic also of laws and of medicine. Whether this has any significance³ is dubious. It seems to be quasi-natural for legislation, being prominent in codes of all ages including the present. Medicine also tends to use the 'if' form in describing symptoms,⁴ and this is what the 'medical omens' and the 'medical texts'⁵ as well do. But the protasis-apodosis style does in certain cases, while preserving the 'omen' form, pass over into matter which is hardly divinatory at all, and it will be convenient to allow these to lead us up to certain notions of personal morality⁶ which, however originally unconnected with man's duty to god (which was purely formal), became involved with his ideas of that duty, and strongly tinged his conception of the principles by which gods governed the world.

The first document is a tablet which has already been described above,⁷ and known since the days of its discoverer as 'giving warnings to kings and judges of the evils which would follow the neglect of justice in the country'.⁸ As already observed, it has more recently been argued that its tendency was political, to exalt the merit of a king who abolished oppressive services imposed by a predecessor upon three of the great Babylonian cities. In the present context its interest is that (*a*) it uses

¹ But the suggested explanation of Egyptian figures (Middle Kingdom) by Capart in *Chronique d'Égypte*, no. 38, p. 263 is very questionable.

² A. Guillaume, *Prophecy and Divination*, pp. 149, 199, 407.

³ As Boissier has stated last in *Mantique babylonienne et Mantique hittite*, p. 3, n. 1. The idea was developed by F. R. Kraus in *ZA*. NF. ix. 81.

⁴ This is true of Egyptian medicine too; the 'if' clause is fairly common in the Ebers papyrus—'if thou examinest (a patient, and findest so-and-so)', while it is regular in the Edwin Smith. The difference in frequency is due to the regularity of diagnostic in Edwin Smith compared with its minor importance in Ebers: see H. Grapow in *MVAeG*. xl. 7 f.

⁵ The difference between these is that the 'omens' merely draw conclusions about the chances of the patient's survival, the latter add both physical and magical remedies.

⁶ A fragment containing miscellaneous omens, either from *Šumma alu* or from the dream-book, some of which have a distinctly moral cast, is translated by E. Ebeling in *MAOG*. iv. 28 f.

⁷ Lecture III, p. 70.

⁸ George Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries* (1875), p. 96.

the omen-form to a purpose other than divination, and (b) its trend is moral, in so far as the aim it has in view is to represent a certain policy as good and *therefore* pleasing to the gods, and its contrary the reverse.

The Babylonians had a work dealing with the highly speculative science of 'physiognomy', the remains of which have been collected.¹ Here, too, the form of all the observations is that of the omens; if the subject shows this physical feature he is destined to that experience in respect of his length of life, fortune, manner of death, and the like, while the conclusions where women are concerned nearly all bear upon their prospects in childbirth. But among the signs obtained from physical features, as among those from manners of speaking, are a few which suggest mental and moral qualities. These were the principal objects of the Greek physiognomy,² and the proportion of forecasts of future destiny and of moral qualities was reversed in the two. Yet it is of interest to find that not only are moral traits inferred from physical appearances by cuneiform texts, but that one of these³ seems to be of an early period. What we notice, therefore, is not only that character was thought to be portrayed in the face and physical habits of a person (this being, however fallible, a widespread and not wholly ungrounded persuasion), but that the Babylonians cast these observations into their familiar omen-form.

Even more remarkable in this kind are some fragments of obscure series of tablets which, in the same form, profess to give consequences of personal behaviour.⁴ They describe various qualities in human beings, 'if he loves the good, if he is merciful, if he is loyal', or manners of speaking, 'if he speaks truth, if he is always cursing', or kinds of conduct such as 'if he is given to wrath, to weeping, if he is a waster', or actions towards his neighbours, 'if he is quarrelsome and a cause of grievance, if he takes thought for his partner' and the like. These are followed

¹ F. R. Kraus in *MVAeG.* xl. 2, *Die physiognomischen Omina der Babylonier.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 15 ff. A late and curious example refers specifically to the 'old books' in which this science was enshrined: Ammianus xv, ch. 8, § 16 (the soldiers gazed upon Julian) 'cuius oculos cum venustate terribilis vultumque excitatus gratum diu multumque contuentes qui futurus sit colligebant velut scrutatis veteribus libris quorum lectio per corporum signa pandit animum interna'. In the Loeb Classical Library translation of this (vol. i, p. 172 f.) J. C. Rolfe quotes Aulus Gellius for the tradition that Pythagoras used to scan the faces of his disciples.

³ Discovered at Sippar; Kraus, *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 57.

⁴ Kraus, 'Ein Sittenkanon in Omenform' (*ZA. NF.* ix. 77 ff.).

by 'consequences' in the omen-form; some of them repeat the idea in the protasis by a change in the same word ('if he does favours, favour will be done to him'), many describe the appropriate results of good and bad behaviour ('if he is merciful he will have many sons, if he is loyal he will see light, if he curses it will return upon him'), while some deal in opposites ('if a man says, I am strong, he will be brought down, if he says, I am weak, he will be mighty, if he says, I am a hero, he will be abashed'). It is clear that some of this matter belongs to the world of dreams,¹ but this does not affect the conclusion that these 'omens', while preserving the form, have made a complete departure from the matter and indeed the purpose of the omen-texts proper.

These examples have been designed to show that a literary form which was used to convey warnings as encouragements from incidents of life when the dictates of merely formal religion were alone in question, was adapted by Babylonian thought as a vehicle to convey ideas of moral correctitude and its consequences. It has also been observed that these ideas very definitely extend to the view that gods were supposed to take of the world; and the result in their dealings with men of their satisfaction with them in a moral sense. Though the examples quoted all exist in literary material which comes to us in copies of the late Assyrian period, there is no need to suppose that the importance of moral issues was a late perception in Babylonia. In the preceding lecture² some notice has been taken of the early rise and steady growth of social consciousness in rulers. As touching the moral ideas of private men and their influence upon religious outlook, the progress of Egypt, where the material is greater, has been followed more closely than that of Babylon. It might be justifiable to summarize our evidence as suggesting that the two great centres of antiquity were in this respect complementary—in Egypt there was more of private morality, in Babylonia more of social conscience.

For all that, the latter country was not destitute of pointers to the better way for men to walk in. The earliest witnesses³ to

¹ Kraus, *loc. cit.*, p. 96, ll. 17-19, has a definite reference to dreams, including the common experience of believing oneself to be walking naked, and the resultant confusion; elsewhere (p. 84, bottom) is mentioned the dream-god Zīqīqu, and there are other imaginings of an insubstantial kind—a man repeats phrases such as 'When shall I behold?' or 'I see the light of god' or he seems to be blessing god, the king, or himself.

² II, p. 43 f.

³ The collections of proverbs belong generally to the Old Babylonian

the level of popular opinion are the collections of proverbs. It is true that such everyday lore is no very reliable gauge of a people's morality,¹ but it is eloquent of their outlook upon life, and it is of special interest here to inquire what place in the average mind was taken by the idea that gods ruled the world in accordance with its moral deserving, and apportioned the fate of individuals in like manner. The answer must be that gods were not thought to be much interested in good conduct. Most of these proverbs, so far as they are intelligible (and many are not, even with Akkadian translations), are no more than acute comments upon common experience, generally with a dash of satire—'when thou hadst escaped thou wert as a wild-ox, when they had caught thee thou cringest like a cur';² 'he that is neighbour to the fool knoweth the fool' and so also the wise;³ perhaps the best in this kind is one from Ur, 'he sacrifices a she-goat, and lo! it is a full-grown he-goat (complete) with beard'⁴—all his geese are swans. It is true that gods are often brought in, but generally in a rather perfunctory way,⁵ suggesting no more than the advisability of attending to religious observances, 'when thou seest the profit of fearing god thou wilt exalt god and bless the king'.⁶ There are, however, a few in a deeper vein, beginning, not very exaltedly, with 'a man who is

(Isin-Larsa) period, but they were copied in later ages and, being part of the scribal education in schools, were afterwards provided with Akkadian translations. For these bilingual sources see B. Meissner in *MAOG.* iii, no. 3, p. 23: the unilingual Sumerian proverbs are mostly in E. Chiera, *Sumerian Texts of Varied Contents*, nos. 1-9, see p. 1, and also *OLZ.* 1937, col. 225. Some unpublished examples found at Ur are quoted in this paragraph.

¹ 'Burckhardt's "Arabic Proverbs" and their illustrations convey many notions of remarkable customs and traits of character of the modern Egyptians; but are very far from composing a complete exposition, or in every case a true one; for national proverbs are bad tests of the morality of a people'—Author's Preface to E. W. Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*.

² *MAOG.* iii, no. 3, p. 43.

³ This and the following are unpublished.

⁴ Another much-broken proverb from Ur represents the Lion saying to the Goat, 'Let us go into partnership in hair. But the Goat answered—' the remainder is missing, but the Goat's reply probably was, 'Yes, I provide the hair and you take the profit.' The well-known picture in the Egyptian papyrus (B.M. 10016) of the Lion unmercifully capturing all the Goat's pieces at draughts might suggest that these two were popular characters in rueful apologues of this kind.

⁵ One proverb cynically says 'go, or go not, to the god thy lord' [it makes no difference], *MAOG.*, loc. cit., p. 31.

⁶ *MAOG.*, loc. cit., p. 30. The opposite effects are suggested by the Old Testament—of cursing God (Job ii. 9) or the king (Eccles. x. 20), the accusation upon which Naboth was stoned, I Kings, xxi. 10, 13.

not with god shall not eat'.¹ The Sun-god, at least, is offended by illicit lucre—'portion added unto portion is an abomination to Shamash',² and he punishes the evildoer—'who with righteousness is confounded? It brings forth life. But as for wickedness, may its power be [broken], may Shamash the great protector seize the disobedient, for he is god.' Another deity also assumes this judgement of the transgressor,³ 'the goddess Nin-e-gal casts two plagues upon the head of the knavish person. His good she makes into evil; before him she causes him to have evil, and seizure she sets to be behind him. Shamash, lord of righteousness, beholds the earth—wickedness he plucks out, righteousness he sets up, a heavy penalty he imposes; a sore plague they cast upon (the sinner).' Two more of these copy-book maxims are worth quoting, for in them real progress towards a pure individual morality is discerned, 'the man of righteousness, though he fall, yet his going forth is great'⁴—no rewards, divine or human, here. A last is even more interesting for in it a real 'conscience' seems to be at work—'the thievish boy said to his mother, "come on, nobody's looking". But his mother answered "he that sees thee is carried (in thy heart?)"'.⁵ Such was the matter which formed the scribal hands and moulded the natures of boys at Ur in the eighteenth century before our era. These proverbs were written out in a correct formal hand by the master on convex bosses of clay and distributed about the class for copies to be written upon similar clay lumps by boys who had graduated out of the elementary task of writing mere names.

There is little or no literary evidence in Babylonia of the moral advance which can be traced between the earlier and later Egyptian doctors of etiquette and conduct. Two well-known compositions best represent the religious temper of the Babylonians, and these hardly differ in ethical level. The complaint of

¹ E. Chiera, *Sumerian Texts of Varied Contents*, no. 1, col. i. 15.

² This and the following proverbs are taken from unpublished tablets found at Ur.

³ Another goddess credited with the rewarding of good and punishing of evil was Nanše, acting through her minister Hēnduršaga, according to a recently published Sumerian text (S. N. Kramer, *AASOR*. xxiii, nos. 67, 68, partially analysed by T. Jacobsen, *BASOR*., no. 102, p. 15).

⁴ Cf. Psalm xxxvii. 24 and Proverbs xxiv. 16.

⁵ If the last phrase (Sum. *igi-du₈-zu tùm-tùm-mu-e-še*) is correctly translated, this is as near a description of 'conscience' as we have from antiquity. Compare 'The god who dwells inside men', i.e. the heart (A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, p. 162).

a righteous sufferer,¹ the so-called 'Babylonian Job', is almost destitute of moral ideas; the afflicted speaker has much to say of his torments, but views them as having been wreaked upon him by demons, whose malevolence has been given rein by gods offended with him for a reason which he is at a loss to fathom.

What to (man) himself seems good is despised by god,
Where have feeble men learned (what is) the way of god?

He dilates upon his piety, but what was this? He had consulted the diviners, he had sacrificed to god and goddess,² he had kept the festivals, honoured the king, and caused all his people to do the like. When his healing came, it was by the sudden repentance of the gods, heralded by dreams of ancient magicians, who took away his burdens, and Marduk himself led him successively through the gates of E-sagila, at each of which a new blessing was conferred upon him. The whole of this is entirely in the realm of formal religion. Nor is it any different in the second of these works,³ the dialogue now called the 'Babylonian Theodicy'. There, too, are on the one side the same unmerited sufferings, the same professions of piety, and the same lack of any claim to moral qualities;⁴ on the other side only the reiteration of a complacent belief that the god-fearing must in the end be fortunate, that gods must be submitted to and cannot be understood.⁵ It is not possible to date exactly either of these works;

¹ See S. Langdon, 'Babylonian Wisdom' (in *Babyloniaca*, vii. 131 ff.) and E. Ebeling in *AOTAT*. (2nd ed.), pp. 274 ff. This was called, from its first words, *ludlul bêl nemeqi*.

² See the passage at the beginning of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, already noticed in this lecture (p. 72, n. 3).

³ B. Landsberger in *ZA*. NF. ix. 32 ff. The recent study of its contents by J. J. Stamm in *JEOL*. no. 9, pp. 99 ff. adds nothing material.

⁴ In the 'Babylonian Job' the only offence of a moral kind which is imagined to give the god displeasure is swearing falsely by his name (Tablet II, 21), but only because of the disrespect shown to the god. In the 'Theodicy' the only partial exception is in strophe xxvii. 291 ff. where the speaker disclaims pride, like the author of Psalm cxxxi.

⁵ It would be a mistake to think that the elaboration of language (which necessitated ancient commentaries to both of these works) betokens a want of earnestness, a greater interest in form than in matter. The ancients laid great stress upon the importance of inculcating serious lessons by the use of the most attractive language. Egyptian and Hebrew moralists dwell with satisfaction upon the literary pleasure and advantage to be had from their perusal, and Lucretius is found (i. 641-4) being too hard upon himself (i. 943 ff.). A writer in the *Mélanges Franz Cumont*, i. 79 quotes a medieval forgery which represents the philosopher Seneca as gravely upbraiding the apostle Paul for his neglect of this necessary elegance. For the Egyptian

whereas the 'Babylonian Job' is represented as a king or ruler of the old Sumerian days there is no mark of time in the 'Theodicy', which has been assigned by scholars to the Kassite period only on grounds of style. There is, nevertheless, an indication that the writer of the second was acquainted with the first, for he seems to allude to it in the artificial sentence which is composed by the first signs of the strophes, read acrostically. These, as now established, run 'I (am) Šaggil-kinam-ubbib, honourer of god and king'. His name, most probably assumed, means 'Šaggil hath cleansed the steadfast', and looks like a deliberate allusion to the rehabilitation of the 'Babylonian Job' by Marduk as he led him through the successive gates of the temple E-sagila. Moreover, the end of this writer's motto, 'honourer of god and king' (*karibu ša ili u šarri*), is at least a possible reminiscence of a phrase in the earlier work 'honouring of the king, that was my delight' (*ikribi šarri šī hiduti*). If, therefore, the 'Theodicy' is in fact the product of a later generation than the *ludlul bēl nemeqi* (how much later there is no telling) its ideas seem to have made no progress in estimating the value set by gods upon the personal virtues of men. Perhaps the just conclusion is that which has already been suggested (p. 82)—social consciousness, as expressed in the proclamations of rulers, was stronger in Babylonia, individual conduct more studied in Egypt.

Possibly the lowest point from which regard for fellow men may start is indicated by a few places in the ancient literatures. In general there is no evidence, and even no awareness, of a time when the detestable practice of cannibalism¹ was surviving among the peoples of the East. It caused horror enough to the inhabitants of Babylonian cities to contemplate the degraded habits of Amorites, who were given to eating raw meat,² and

appreciation of style see T. E. Peet, *Schweich Lectures*, 1929, p. 129, but he was clearly wrong in denying it to the Babylonians, however little their taste may resemble ours.

¹ When the dead in the Babylonian underworld are said to 'eat dust', this drastic illustration of their utter fall from the amenities of life might be a distant echo of the primitive barbarity of earth-eating; this has been described and studied in a paper by D. Hooper and H. H. Mann, *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, i. 249-70.

² E. Chiera, *Sumerian Epics and Myths*, no. 58, rev. col. iv. 27 f. and *Sumerian Religious Texts*, p. 20. Also S. N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology*, p. 101. Even Enkidu in his wild state only ate grass and sucked milk. All that he had to learn was to eat bread and drink beer in order to become civilized. A phrase like 'brother ate brother' in K. 4541 (see above, p. 70, n. 2) is obviously no more than figurative of a state of extreme faction.

the polite Egyptians described with loathing the diet and occupations of their own lower orders. In contrast with the Greeks, whose mythology has surprisingly many reminiscences of cannibalism,¹ the Egyptians, if they had ever practised it,² retained an allusion only in the well-known spells of the Pyramid Texts,³ where the dead king, on his arrival among the gods, absorbs all their magic powers by actually dismembering, cooking, and eating them, as related with many ghastly details. But this is magic, outside the scope of ordinary ideas, even if it be admitted that the reminiscence proceeds from reality, the belief in eating men to obtain their powers being a common motive of primitive peoples. In any case it was too remote for the dynastic Egyptians to preserve any recollection of it, and there is no trace of it in Babylonia. But a fragment of a Hittite legend⁴ which purported to give an account of an ancient conflict contained a surprisingly explicit reference to what it described as the custom of an ancient tribe or city (the narrative itself is far from clear)—‘whatsoever man among them dies(?) they are wont to eat him. And if they see a fat man they kill him and devour him.’ It goes on to tell of an occasion when these savages ate the companions(?) and the mother of a hostile king.

If cannibalism is the nethermost pit out of which man has to crawl at the beginning of his journey, at the end of it lies the dead ground of sophistication, where ‘all is vanity’ has levelled the moral landscape and left no incentive to action, hardly even the fancy of a moment. Doubtless the most remarkable example of this mentality in ancient literature is the Assyrian dialogue⁵ between a master and slave, now so well known that description

¹ And even to head- and skin-hunting: L. Gernet et A. Boulanger, *Le Génie grec dans la religion*, p. 84.

² The supposed archaeological evidence for it, derived from the condition of bodies in certain predynastic graves, is now generally rejected (A. Wiedemann, *Das alte Ägypten*, p. 109, n. 1). But Faulkner (see next note) has observed that the ‘Cannibal Hymn’ at least suggests an ancient victory of the south over the north country. Diodorus (i. 14) has it that the Egyptians were weaned from cannibalism by Isis and Osiris who showed them the use and preparation of cereals. Osiris is represented as claiming to have created barley and millet, but his assertion is rudely rejected by the reply of Ra-Harakhti (see A. H. Gardiner, *Chester-Beatty Papyrus*, no. 1, p. 25; also A. M. Blackman, *Osiris as the Maker of Corn in a Text of the Ptolemaic Period*, *Analecta Orientalia*, no. 17). ³ Translated by R. O. Faulkner in *JEA*. x. 97 ff.

⁴ Translated and discussed by H. G. Güterbock in *ZA*. NF. x. 105–12.

⁵ Main text in Ebeling, *KAR.*, no. 96, translated by the same in *MVAG*. 1918, no. 2, pp. 50 ff. and in *AOTAT*. (2nd ed.), pp. 284 ff. with other references.

would be superfluous. Yet it is worth observing that the utter indifference so callously expressed by the slave is not confined to his master's whims of eating, driving, building, and the like, but extends to both formal and ethical religion, both sacrifice and mercy, in prophetic language. Sacrifice to the god and you will lay up treasure upon treasure with him—or don't sacrifice, but teach the god to run after you like a dog for what he wants: it makes no difference, according to this blasphemer. Give benefits to your country and they will be registered before Marduk—or you can save yourself the trouble; go up to the ancient ruined mounds and see the skulls of the former and the latter men; which of them was the evildoer, which the beneficent? Perplexity dawns at last even in the master's shallow pate, 'well, what is good then?' Savagely the wretch replies, 'to break my neck, thy neck, to throw oneself into the river, that is good'. 'Nay, sirrah, I will slay thee and make thee go on before me.' 'Why then, master, it may be three days that will keep (thee) alive after me.' This dialogue is said by the colophon of the Assyrian tablet to be copied from an older original. How much older cannot be known,¹ but the copy itself is of about the end of the eighth century B.C., in the midst of Isaiah's prophetic mission. Perhaps such a deplorable effusion proves how sorely the contemporary world was in need of a new preaching. But if any society was indeed steeped in such a nihilism as this it had already outlived the experience and the aid of such physicians.²

¹ The speculations of Langdon, 'Babylonian Wisdom' (*Babyloniaca*, vii. 195) are baseless.

² A. Causse, in *Actes du Ve Congrès international d'Histoire des Religions, à Lund*, p. 287, '[le Deutéronome] voulait enrayer la décadence de l'ancienne société'.

ON THE NECROMANCY OF THE WITCH OF ENDOR

A close parallel with the celebrated episode of 1 Sam. xxviii is, of course, the raising of the ghost of Enkidu in order to answer the questions of Gilgamesh, in the scene which closes the Twelfth Tablet of the Epic. There is now a Sumerian version of this passage, and the relevant lines read (*B.E.* xxxi, no. 35, obv. 13 ff.):

13. *ur-sag šul^a utu dumu^a nin-gal-e-tu-da gù-[mu-na-d]é-e*
14. *ì-dè-éš ab-lál-kur-ri gál-ù-bí-in-šub*
15. - - - ? *-ni kur-ta è-dè-mu-na-ab*
16. *ab-lál-kur-ri gál-mu-na-ab-šub*
17. ? ? ? *-a-ni kur-ta mu-ni-in-è-dè*

13. (To) the hero, the mighty Sun-god, the son whom the goddess Nin-gal bore, he said
14. Now sink a hole in the ground
15. His [brother?] from the ground, make him come up
16. A hole in the ground he sank for him
17. His - - - ? from the ground he made come up.

[Notes: 13. See S. N. Kramer, *JAOS.* lxiv. 22, n. 108, also *JAOS.* lx. 247; the latter is a collation of the readings of all these lines.

14. *ab-lál* seems to be a merely graphic variant of *ab-lal* = *aptu*, window, hole. If the signs are to be taken strictly they would mean 'a hole for honey', not inappropriate to a cavity in the ground.

15. Kramer says that the reading is not - - - *a-ni*, but the same occurs in l. 17 where it is not contested. Whatever the missing substantive it was a description of Enkidu as 'his (i.e. Gilgamesh's) friend, brother, servant' or the like: probably 'brother' as in l. 81 of the Assyrian version.]

It is worth while to quote the parallel Assyrian lines (R. C. Thompson, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, xii, pl. 57, ll. 79 ff.).

79. *lu-man tak-ka-ab [iršitim pitema]*
80. *u-tuk-ku ša^a en-ki-dù [ultu iršitim liši]*
81. *a-na a-ši-[šu]*
82. *qar-ra-du iṭ-lu^a nergal(?)*
83. *lu-man tak-ka-ab iršitim^{im} ip-te-e-ma*
84. *u-tuk-ku ša^a en-ki-dù ki-i za-qi-qi ul-tu iršitim^{im} it-ta-ša-a*

79. Now open a hole in the ground
80. The ghost of Enkidu, let it come forth from the ground
81. to his brother.
82. The hero, the mighty Nergal(?),
83. Now opened a hole in the ground
84. The ghost of Enkidu like a wind came forth from the ground.

[Notes: 79. Jensen's argument (*KB.* vi. 1, p. 527) for the meaning of *lu-man* is corroborated by the Sumerian version *ì-dè-éš* = *inanna*, 'now':

for the different Sumer. writings see A. Deimel, *Akkadisch-Sumerisches Glossar*, p. 178.

82. Nergal is uncertain, the sign being broken. In the Sumerian it is Utu, the Sun-god; see Kramer, *JAOS*. lxiv. 22, n. 108.]

The hole in the ground through which Enkidu's ghost came up is in Sumerian *ab-lál*, in Akkadian *takkabu* (the consonants of this are uncertain). *ab-lál* is obviously a graphic variant for *ab-lal*, the equivalent of Akk. *aptu*, and *ab-lal* is given as the reading of a compound sign *lagab*+*a-lal*, of which the Akk. equivalents are (1) *qinnu ša iššuri*, 'bird's nest', and (2) *takkabu*. On the close relationship of all these words see Jensen, *KB*. vi. 1, 528 f. The omen which he quotes is now available in fuller form, *CT*. xxxviii. 7, ll. 1, 2, and is of interest here, 'if in a hole in the city gate a "ruined-city bird" has made a nest, fire will fall spontaneously upon the abode of the *apsu*; destruction of Eridu'. The *apsu* being the waters underground (in Eridu), probably some artificial tank-construction, the ordinary association of ideas suggests that the bird has built its nest in the ground, and here again *takkabu* would be like the hole (itself a *takkabu*) through which the spirit of Enkidu came up. This is again suggested by the sign *lagab*+*a-lal* which means both 'bird's nest' and the 'hole' (*takkabu*) in which it is made. That the nest should be upon the ground in the gateway obviously portends that the gateway is destined to be deserted, no longer a place of busy passage. The 'ruined-city bird' adds, of course, to the threat. It is unidentified, but the name is what matters to the omen.

The Witch of Endor, like other necromancers, was the possessor of an '*ôbh*', a word of which the meaning and etymology have been long and inconclusively discussed—there are some recent references in W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 203, n. 31. It is not certain that any of the uses of the word require it to signify the spirit itself, rather than a means by which the spirits operated. Was the '*ôbh*', in fact, the hole through which the dead were evoked? In the Gilgamesh Epic such a hole has to be made by the gods, and it might be thought that a meaning such as 'hole, hollow' is at least more easy to relate with the use in Job xxxii. 19. Etymologically, the assonance with Sumerian *ab* need not be pressed, but can at least be mentioned in the absence of more convincing cognates in the Semitic languages.

A passage in the Ras-Shamra poem of Dan-el (no. 1, col. 1, ll. 109 ff.) has been rendered by H. G. May in *AJSL*. 1939, p. 64, as 'from the mouth and lips of the earth came the oracle'. But this cannot be quoted as a parallel, for the translation is not now accepted (C. H. Gordon in *Orientalia*, 1943, p. 69).

ADDITIONAL NOTE B (*Lecture II*, p. 43)

THE RELIEF UPON THE HAMMURABI STELE

It is universally assumed, and would be hazardous to deny, that the god represented is Shamash. There are many similar scenes in which the identity is clearly indicated, and it is even said that the sun-symbol once stood in the damaged spot above the god's crown. But if the god is Shamash it is strange how small a part he takes in the prologue and epilogue to the Code. He is significantly mentioned in the epilogue, col. xxv, 95 ff. and col. xxvi. 14, 15, 'may Shamash make his sceptre long', but all the emphasis elsewhere is laid upon Marduk, particularly in col. xxv, where the glory is given to *Marduk* by the wronged man who has come into *E-sagila* to read the laws. This discrepancy could be explained by the usual assumption that the stele found at Susa was plundered from Sippar. In that case it might be inferred, and would be a very natural inference, that a stele of his laws was set up by Hammurabi in each of his principal cities, and that upon each he caused himself to be represented as the chosen of the supreme local divinity, without altering the inscription, which had been written for his capital. But there is no positive evidence that the stele of Hammurabi came from Sippar; it has only been conjectured from the figure of Shamash, and from the attested provenance of the stele of Naram-Sin.

The ring and staff are not peculiar to Shamash, being shown in the hands of a variety of gods and goddesses—the examples would be worth collection in a special study. It may be enough to mention the sculptures of Maltai, where gods hold both, but goddesses only the ring (see *RA.* xxi. 193). These two symbols, however, are called, as though specifically, the 'gestamen' (*mušši*) of Shamash, on the Sun-god Tablet from Sippar (despite the arguments of Poebel in *AJSL.* lii. 126, with which I am obliged to disagree), but a 'ring' of coiled cord(?) and a looped line, with a specially long staff, take their place in the hand of the Moon-god on the Ur-Nammu Stele from Ur (see the *Philadelphia Museum Journal*, 1927, p. 85). These might be taken as the rod and line for meting out justice, and so provide corroboration for the belief that the staff in the hands of the Sun-god also is the rule of justice. But the measuring-stick and line tendered to Ur-Nammu are not symbols of investiture but instruments conveying the god's commission to mark out the foundations of the temple which he is vouchsafed to build. The language of many kings leaves no doubt that the staff at least was an emblem of sovereignty presented by gods—several of these expressions are quoted by R. Labat, *Caractère religieux de la royauté*, p. 90, and there is a couplet in a prayer (*KAR.* no. 7, ll. 8, 9, cf. Ebeling, *MVAG.* 1918, p. 38) which attributes to Shamash the gift of the king's sceptre and staff. Yet how little the conferring of these was a prerogative of Shamash, or thereby specifically a symbol of just rule, may be gathered from a wall-painting, contemporary with Hammurabi, found at Mari

(*Syria* xviii, 336 ff. and pl. xxxix), where the king, with a similar gesture, receives these tokens from an armed goddess. In this painting it is of interest to observe that the staff and the ring are differently coloured, the staff being white and the ring red. Although this difference is not enough to inform us adequately of their material, it tends to discredit, if that were necessary, a belief that ring and staff were a single object. Their distinctness and their purport are further emphasized by a very late but significant illustration of this rite upon the rock relief at Naqs-i-Rustam showing the investiture of Ardashir I (Dieulafoy, *L'Art antique de la Perse*, 5^{ième} partie, pl. xiv), where the god holds ring (coronet) and sceptre apart in each hand while the king grasps the coronet in his right and uplifts his left hand.

A recent suggestion (Contenau, *La Divination chez les Assyriens*, p. 182) that the staff was an instrument of 'radiesthésie' seems very fanciful.

ADDITIONAL NOTE C (*Lecture II*, p. 49)

THE ASSYRIAN CONE-SMEARING CEREMONY

The explanation of this often-depicted rite as derived from the pollination of the date-palm should now be abandoned, for it is in no way appropriate to the scenes in which the cone is applied to the king and his weapons, or where the leaves are touched or plucked by the 'genii', nor is the tree a palm, even if the cones are, in fact, like the male efflorescence. These objections have been allowed by recent writers (though Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté*, p. 289 f., still thinks that a symbolic fertilization of the land is implied), and a variety of explanations has been offered and analogies noted. But it is not sufficiently observed that in the Assyrian ceremony the tree is itself the source of magic virtue which the 'genii' take and transfer to the king, or the king draws directly by touching the tree. What he obtains therefrom is, doubtless, life and strength, by identifying himself with the life of the tree—many primitive manifestations of this idea are described by J. G. Frazer in *Balder the Beautiful*, ii. 160 f. Comparisons of this rite with Egyptian practices have been common, but have not included what seems to be the most suggestive parallel, namely, the numerous scenes where the Pharaoh is shown beside the sacred (persea?) tree in the company of divinities who promise him countless years of life, reckon these upon notched tallies of palm-branch, and inscribe his name upon the fruits of the tree. The best preserved of these representations seems to be that in the 'Astronomical Room' of the Ramesseum (see Porter and Moss, *Topographical Bibliography*, ii. 155, no. 44); the ideas connected by the Egyptians with this tree and this scene have been fully discussed by E. Lefébure in *Sphinx*, v. 1 ff. and 65 ff. In general, it appears that the king is granted, by the magic inscribing of his name, the life and fruitfulness of the tree, which also dispenses the virtue of

the sun, as witnessed both by various texts and by the presence of the scarab with outspread wings (Lefébure, loc. cit., p. 9), resembling the winged disk over the tree in Assyrian scenes.

ADDITIONAL NOTE D (*Lecture II*, p. 54)

LIVER-DIVINATION AND ASTROLOGY IN THE
REST OF WESTERN ASIA

Apart from the main centres in Babylonia and (by derivation) among the Hittites there is surprisingly little evidence of these two customs in the other regions of Western Asia.

Liver-divination. The use of this at Mari, attested both in the letters (C. F. Jean in *Revue des études sémitiques*, 1941, p. 102) and by the liver-models (M. Rutten in *RA.* xxxv. 36 ff.), as also at Chagar-Bazar (*Iraq*, vii. 25), may be regarded as no more than natural extensions of Babylonian practice. In remoter lands traces are very scanty. It is well known that hepatoscopy is not mentioned (as an Israelite custom) in the Old Testament, and the material indications from the remainder of Palestine are no more than two or three clay objects with markings which have been supposed similar to the liver-models of Babylonia, Ashur, Mari, and Boğaz-köy; these were found at Gezer (Macalister, *Gezer*, ii, fig. 535, cf. S. A. Cook, *Schweich Lectures*, 1925, p. 103), Megiddo (*Illustr. Lond. News*, 1936, p. 1109), and Tell-bêt-Mirsim (see *AfO.* v. 120). Earlier statements that divining by the liver of eagles is referred to in the Ras-Shamra story of Dan-el (1st Tablet, col. i, ll. 109 ff.) are not supported by more recent interpreters (C. H. Gordon in *Orientalia*, 1943, pp. 68 ff. and H. L. Ginsberg in *BASOR.*, no. 97, p. 7), who explain that the eagles were examined only to see whether they had devoured Aqhat.

Astrology is still more sparsely attested. An indication has been sought in another passage of the Ras-Shamra literature which, if rightly so understood, would remain as the only reference to divination in those stories. This occurs in the legend of Keret, col. iv, ll. 187 f. (Virolleaud, *La Légende de Keret*, pp. 46 f., 77), 'the blind man tells fortunes' (from the stars?) But this sense could be tolerated only as an intentional contradiction, used by the author in ludicrous emphasis, and the meaning of the word is so inferential that it is poor evidence for 'the extent to which Mesopotamian astrology had gained ground among the Canaanites as early as the fifteenth century B.C.'. (*BASOR.*, no. 94, p. 18, n. 30). The embarrassment of subsequent translators (H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Keret*, and T. H. Gaster's review in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1946, p. 288) shows that the passage is not at present intelligible.

ADDITIONAL NOTE E (*Lecture II, p. 57*)

THE WRITING OF THE CONSTELLATIONS

That the Assyrians professed to be able to read the stars literally is put almost beyond doubt by the figures on the Black Stone and certain prisms of Esarhaddon, as demonstrated by the late Professor D. D. Luckenbill in *AJSL*. xli. 168 ff. from the king's own language, which states clearly that (*a*) the figures represent constellations, and (*b*) they are 'the likeness of the writing of my name'. The ingenious attempt of Luckenbill (*ibid.*) to equate the figures with cuneiform signs of roughly similar outline is probably baseless; the system of interpretation used by the Assyrians is unknown to us, but any future attempt to read the figures on the Black Stone should take account of the possibility suggested below concerning the similar figures at Khorsabad.

Such pictures then may be taken as what is meant by the phrase *šitir burume* (written with unimportant variants), or less often *šitir šamē*. All the usually quoted passages show that *burume* has a close connexion with *šamē*, for which it is therefore said to be a religious or poetic expression, and in fact the words are equated by an Assyrian 'synonym-list' (*ZA*. NF. ix. 237, l. 99). A particularly instructive occurrence proves that this is not strictly accurate; it is found in a recently discovered inscription of Ashur-bani-pal from Nineveh (R. C. Thompson in *Liverpool Annals*, xx, pl. xc and p. 80, l. 4), where the goddess Nin-lil is praised as *mar-kas bu-ru-um-me elluti^{mes} ša ina šamē rap-šu-ti šur-šu-du*, 'bond of the clear *burumme* which are founded in the broad heavens'. This leaves no doubt that the *burumme* were the constellations. Jensen was probably right in thinking that the word is not to be separated from the adjective *burrumu*, 'motley-coloured' (*Kosmologie*, pp. 6-8, 45, and *KB*. vi. 1. 363, where, however, he introduces an etymology now seen to be erroneous). Again in a curious Assyrian passage (*KAR*. no. 307, obv. 30-33; see Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*, i, 33, also R. C. Thompson, *Dict. of Assyrian Chemistry and Geology*, p. 75) which describes three superimposed heavens as made of different stones, the lowest of these, which alone would be visible, is made of jasper (blue or green), and the *lumasi*-stars of the gods are outlined upon it. The colour in which these figures were rendered is specifically mentioned by Esarhaddon, but has completely disappeared from the Black Stone and the prisms. At Khorsabad, however, the excavators, both in the last century and in this (see V. Place, *Ninive et l'Assyrie*, iii. 27-31, and G. Loud, *Khorsabad*, Parts I. 93 ff., II. 41), have found at the entrance to certain temples platforms faced with bricks moulded in relief and bright with coloured enamels, the figures standing out in yellow (with other colours in detail) against a deep-blue background. They represent a lion and bull, a bird, a fig-tree, and a plough; of these the bull and plough are shared with the Black Stone, which also has trees, though of other kinds. There need be little hesitation in believing that these Khorsabad figures display to us the *šitir burume* as the Assyrians represented it, the writing of the motley-

coloured constellations upon the blue background of the heavens. It would hardly be too bold to go a step farther—if the figures of the Black Stone in some way spelt 'Esarhaddon' (as we are told they did), the figures at the entrance to the Khorsabad temples perhaps spelt 'Sargon' in the same system; it should be noted, however, that a fragment of a Sargon prism (*Afo*. xiv. 48) has traces of moulded figures which seem to be different.

Such painted pictures on temples had a very long history, which has lately been found to extend back into the 'Jamdat Nasr' period at the small temple of Uqair (*JNES*. ii. 132 ff. and pl. x ff.) where paintings of leopards flanked an altar. Whether such figures had any astrological significance in Sumerian times is unknown. But from Gudea's descriptions (see especially Cylinder A, col. 21. 6, 'the temple is a young, a fearful leopard', and col. 25, 2, 3, 'the temple's *ka-gid-da* chamber is a divine wolf which causes terror') it is evident that animal decoration was very prominent in the temple which he built at Lagash. Many of the accessories are plainly stated to have been in animal form and much of the language describing the temple or parts of it as 'like' this or that creature is not empty imagery but refers to figures of all kinds, real or demoniac, which were prominent in its decoration. A similar continuity in ideas is illustrated by the 'trees' of cedar-wood cased in bronze which were set upon the afore-mentioned brick platforms at Khorsabad, and, in an intermediate age, palms painted upon the walls at Mari (*Syria*, xviii. 341, pl. 39, and xix. 23; see, for other examples, *Orientalia*, 1944, p. 282). It is probable that comparisons of temples with trees (M. Witzel, *Analecta Orientalia*, xv. 81, 104) were primarily descriptive of this prominent feature in their decoration.

For a mythological reason not wholly clear, perhaps because the heavens were thought to be made of stone, the Assyrians connected these painted figures especially with foundations. This is shown both by the word *šuršudu* in the Ashur-bani-pal passage quoted above—the constellations themselves being 'founded' in the sky—still more convincingly by the Black Stone and prisms (foundation deposits), and possibly by the Khorsabad brick-reliefs, which decorated the front of platforms supporting other religious emblems. With these facts in mind we may examine the most celebrated passage referring to the *šīṭir burume*, that with which Sennacherib began his account of rebuilding the palace at Nineveh (Luckenbill, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, p. 94, l. 64, and p. 103, ll. 27-9). This will now be seen to describe exactly the features which characterize the platforms at Khorsabad. There are the terrace (*timmennu, duruṣṣu*), the coloured figures on a blue ground (*šīṭir burume*), the outlining wall (*iṣratsu iṣrit*), and the splendour of the containing wall (*šupū ṣinduṣu*). The thing was, in fact, what was perceived by Mr. S. Smith in 1921 (*The First Campaign of Sennacherib*, p. 82), 'coloured reliefs built into the wall surrounding the terrace or platform on which the old palace at Nineveh was built'. This definition was given in protest against a rather vaguely conceived idea that Sen-

nacherib was describing a city built upon earth in imitation of a heavenly prototype marked out by stars. The most explicit statement of this is found in Meissner's *Babylonien und Assyrien*, ii. 110: 'Im übrigen gilt die Anschauung, dass nach dem Gesetz von der Entsprechung des Makrokosmos und Mikrokosmos die Urbilder aller Länder, Flüsse, Städte und Tempel am Himmel in gewissen Sternbildern existierten, während diese irdischen Dinge nur Abbilder davon seien'; see also Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté*, p. 186. This Sennacherib passage should no longer be quoted in evidence of Assyrian beliefs as to the dimensional relation of heaven and earth.

ADDITIONAL NOTE F (*Lecture III*, p. 66)

FIGURINES OF GODS IN DIVINATION

In view of the recent evidence mentioned on p. 65 it is strange that doubts continue to be expressed what the *teraphim* were (e.g. R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 169, n.). Their use in divination has always caused difficulty; it has lately been suggested (by H. G. May in *AJSL*. 1939, p. 48) that the ephod was a box containing figurines which served this purpose. As regards the figurines themselves, a hint may be obtained from a fragment of Assyrian magical text, DT. 41, published by L. W. King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation*, i. 122. It begins, as not uncommonly, with a summary account of creation, as explanatory of how the circumstances in question came into being. The special point here emphasized is that the deity Nin-igi-ku (i.e. the 'lord of the clear eye') made 'two little ones', and after a break there remains just enough to see that they(?) were called 'the two lots (*isqa*) white and black'. It may be suggested that the text of DT. 41 was the beginning of an incantation to be used at the taking of lots, and that the objects lying before the operator were two little (clay) figurines, probably in human form, coloured white and black, which responded to the set manipulation in terms of assent or denial. That the clay figurines were variously coloured is known both from survivals and from ritual directions. White and black had, of course, their usual significance (see *Orientalia*, 1945, p. 22, n. 4). Perhaps, then, it was some such questioning of the *teraphim* which the king of Babylon performed 'at the head of the two ways' (Ezek. xxi. 21).

ADDITIONAL NOTE G (*Lecture III*, p. 72)

'ZOGANES' AND THE 'SAKAIA'

The custom of appointing a 'substitute king' (*šar puhi*) is known to have prevailed in Assyria (W. von Soden in *ZA*. NF. ix. 255 and A. Schott, *ibid.* xiii. 112). It was done as a last expedient under the threat of an eclipse, the dire portending of which could not be denied or explained away, with the puerile hope of thus delivering the real king from harm. But there is no native evidence for the annual saturnalia of

'Zoganes', which are nevertheless strongly attested by Greek writers (summarized in R. Labat, *Le Caractère religieux de la royauté*, 98 ff.), and have been often conjectured to have something to do with the New-Year festival. It has also been long ago suggested that the 'Persian Sakaia' was connected with a Persian medieval performance called 'the ride of the beardless (or, thin-bearded) one', which is described by L. H. Gray in Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, v. 873—this description has been partly misunderstood by S. Langdon, writing in the *JRAS.* 1924, p. 71. The only purpose of mentioning all this again is to remark that, despite the hint concerning the 'beardless' horseman, the name 'Zoganes' (which has evoked so many attempted explanations) has not yet been connected with Akkadian *zaqnu* 'bearded', which might seem not only the closest phonetically, but directly suggested (though in the opposite sense) by the 'beardless' rider of a later age. It is needless to insist upon the significance of the royal beard in Egypt (A. H. Gardiner in *JEA.* xxx. 29, n. 2) or in Babylonia, where the false-bearded bulls found at Ur and the appellation of the king as 'bearded with lapis-lazuli' (A. Falkenstein in *ZA.* NF. x. 7 f.) all attest its sacred virtue. One might perhaps observe also that a picture (reproduced in G. A. Wainwright, *The Sky-Religion in Egypt*, pl. II, opp. p. 60) of the Abu-Nairuz procession in modern Egypt shows the rider adorned with a fantastic moustache.

ADDITIONAL NOTE H (*Lecture III*, p. 75)

SURVIVALS OF SOME BABYLONIAN OMENS

The life of popular superstitions may be immensely long, as will be seen from two or three curious examples. *CT.* xxxviii, pl. 47, l. 50, 'if a pig goes into a man's house carrying palm-fibre(?) in its mouth, the owner of that house will . . .'. A similar thing is noticed in Vergil, *Georg.* i. 399 f. 'dirty pigs forget to toss loose wisps with their mouths'; here it has become a sign of fine weather, if pigs do not pick up straws. The same omen and significance appears once more in a much later and less dignified context, 'he [Mr. Swiveller] also observed that, while standing by a post at the street corner, he had observed a pig with a straw in his mouth issuing out of the tobacco-shop, from which appearance he augured that another fine week for the ducks was approaching, and that rain would certainly ensue' (Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, ch. 2).

Again, in *CT.* xxxviii, pl. 21, omens are drawn from the fanciful appearance of water spilt upon the ground at a house-door; it may seem to assume the shapes of a serpent, eagle, lion, wild ox, man, fox, or goat, in various attitudes, from all of which prognostications are made. At an extreme interval of time and place occurs the following description—'on le voyait quelquefois, avec une cruche qu'il avait, verser de l'eau à terre. Or l'eau qu'on jette à terre trace la forme des diables' (Victor Hugo, *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, livre premier, iv).

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PRINTED IN
GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
OXFORD
BY
CHARLES BATEY
PRINTER
TO THE
UNIVERSITY

